1577

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

161

THE

HISTORY OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

MOST EARLY PERIOD

TO

THE PRESENT TIME.

VOL. II.

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THE

HISTORY OF PERSIA,

FROM THE

MOST EARLY PERIOD

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THE PRESENT TIME:

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

Religion, Government, Usages, and Character

OF THE

INHABITANTS OF THAT KINGDOM.

BY

COLONEL SIR JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B., K.L.S.

LATE MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE COURT OF PERSIA
FROM THE SUPREME GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. *

CHAPTER XVI.

An account of the Affghan rulers in Persia.—Reign of Mahmood.—Invasion of Persia by the Russians and Turks.—Death, character, and government of Mahmood.—Ashrâff succeeds to the throne.—Conquests made by the Czar of Russia and the Emperor of Constantinople—Partition treaty between these potentates.—Ashrâff's war with the Turks—His successes.—Peace concluded between the Affghan prince and the Turkish emperor.—Account of Shah Tâmâsp.—Rise of Nâdir Kooli Khan—His successes.—Defeat of the Affghans—Their expulsion from Persia—Death and character of their prince, Ashrâff. .... page 1—43

CHAPTER XVII.

Life and reign of Nâdir Shah—His obscure birth—Early achievements—Dethrones Tâmâsp—His wars with the Turks—Ascends the throne—War with the Affghans—Invasion of India—Expedition to Bokharah—To Khaurizm—Attacks the Lesghees—Concludes peace with the Turks—Becomes avaricious and cruel—Barbarous actions—Death and character.—Ahmed Khan Abdâllee proceeds to Candahar, and founds a separate kingdom.—Successors of Nâdir Shah.—Aly, who obtains the throne of Persia, assumes the title of Adil Shah.—Ibrahim Khan proclaims himself king—Is put to death.—Reign of Shah Rokh. .... 44—114

CHAPTER XVIII.

Life of Kurreem Khan Zund—Attains power.—Situation and character of the population of Persia at this period.—Wars of Kurreem Khan with Azâd Khan Affghan, and Mahomed Hussein Khan Kujur—His ultimate success—Conquest of Bussorah—Death and character of Kurreem Khan. .... 115—152

CHAPTER XIX.

Successors of Kurreem Khan.—Abool Futteh Khan proclaimed king—Imprisoned.—Mahomed Aly Khan proclaimed.—The power of the monarch usurped by Zuckee Khan—Barbarous actions of that prince—His death.—Abool Futteh Khan again raised to the throne—Deposed by Sâduck Khan—Reign of Sâduck Khan—His death.—Aly Moorâd Khan—Events of his reign—Death.—Jaaffeer Khan—His wars with Aga Mahomed Khan Kujur—His death.—Is succeeded by Lootf Aly Khan—Reign of that prince—Shiraz seized by his minister, Hajee Ibrahim—Heroic efforts of Lootf Aly Khan to re-establish his power—Obliged to take refuge in Khorassan—Returns and seizes Kerman—Siege of that city by Aga Mahomed *Khan Kujur*—Escape of Lootf *Aly* Khan—Is taken, and put to death—Character of *Lootf Aly* Khan, the last prince of the Zund dynasty............page 153—202

CHAPTER XX.

View of Persia, and adjoining countries, before the elevation of the reigning family to the throne.—Condition of the principal chiefs of Persia at the period Aga Mahomed Khan attained power.—Brief account of the province of Kurdistan.—Situation of the pachalick of Bagdad.—Actual state of the province of Khorassan.—Short notice of the successors of Ahmed Khan Abdâllee, sovereigns of Cabul.—State of Scind, Seistan, and Baloochistan.—Government of Bokharah—Elevation of Beggee Jân to the throne of that kingdom—His life and character. .... 203—261

CHAPTER XXI.

Life of Aga Mahomed Khan—Made prisoner and emasculated—Effects his escape, and attains great power—His contests with Aly Khan—Jaaffer Khan and Lootf Aly Khan—Condition of Persia at the accession of Aga Mahomed Khan—His treatment of the Turkoman tribes near Asterabad—His invasion of Georgia—Reduces several chiefs of Khorassan to submission.—Conduct of the Russian Government.—Death and character of Aga Mahomed Khan.—Futteh Aly Khan proclaimed king—Establishes his power in Khorassan—Georgia becomes a province of Russia.—The Court of Persia visited by ambassadors from European nations..... 262—318

CHAPTER XXII.

Religion of the inhabitants of Persia.—Doctrines of Mahomed—Soonee and Sheah sects.—An account of the Sooffees—Their tenets—Remarkable teachers—Progress of this class of devotees in Persia. .... 319—426

CHAPTER XXIII.

Government of Persia—Power of the monarch—Duties of his ministers.—Laws of Persia.—Administration of Justice.—Mode of collecting revenue.—An account of the army of Persia.......................................page 427 — 503

CHAPTER XXIV.

Climate of Persia. — Animal, vegetable, and mineral productions. — Population.—Principal cities and towns.—Commerce.—Agriculture.—Manufactures.—Arts and sciences. — Literature.......................................504 — 543

CHAPTER XXV.

An account of the manners and usages of the inhabitants of Persia.—Education and habits of the royal family.—Forms of court, &c.—Banners and arms.—Ceremonies observed by viceroys and governors of provinces.—Amusements.—Condition and treatment of women.—Marriages and divorce.—Condition and treatment of slaves.—Manners and usages of the Eelliaats, or wandering tribes.—Condition of the Arabian tribes in Persia.......................................544 — 620

CHAPTER XXVI.

Observations on the condition and character of the sovereigns of Persia—Of the princes of the blood royal—Of the ministers and officers of the court—Of the governors of provinces and cities—Of the religious orders—Of the inhabitants of cities and towns—Of the military tribes.—Concluding remarks on the character of the nation.......................................621 — 638

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE

HISTORY OF PERSIA.

CHAPTER XVI.

An Account of the Affghan Monarchs who assumed the Title of Kings of Persia, with a cursory View of the Invasion of that Country by the Turks and Russians.

CHAP. XVI.

A. D. 1722.
A. H. 1134.

Measures adopted by Mahmood, on his assuming the sovereignty of Persia.

THE reign of the Affghan monarchs, Mahmood and Ashrâff, over Persia, occupies a short, but eventful period in the history of that country. The first of those sovereigns, though cruel and capricious, showed, in the commencement of his reign, some of the qualities of a good statesman. The moment he became master of Isfahan, he endeavoured to relieve its inhabitants from the miseries of famine. His next care was to establish confidence among his new subjects: and in both of these important objects he succeeded. It appeared to this prince as dangerous to employ the officers of the Persian government, as to appoint his own to stations, with the duties of which they were wholly unacquainted*: he ordered, therefore, the

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 183.

CHAP. XVI. Persians he found in office to be continued, but nominated a colleague to each from his own nation: and, by this arrangement, he had the advantage of the experience of the one, and the fidelity of the other*. The only exception to this rule, was the chief judge of the city, and to that high situation he appointed an Affghan of such singular piety and rectitude, that the citizens themselves assented to the propriety and justice of his choice. It is natural that conquerors and usurpers, whatever benefit they may have derived from treason, should hate and dread those whom they know to be traitors. Every person who had carried on a secret correspondence with the Affghans, or had been false to their duty during the siege, was punished by Mahmood†: and the Persians saw, with delight, the Affghan prince avenge the wrongs of their late sovereign. The Waly of Arabia escaped with life, (on account, it was believed, of a vow which the conqueror had made not to kill him); but he was disgraced, and his possessions in the province of Khuzistan given to his younger brother. The noblemen of the Persian court, who had preserved their fidelity unshaken to Shah Hussein, were those who appeared to be most favoured by the Affghan monarch: and he carried this so far, as publicly to approve the integrity and spirit of Mahomed Kooli Khan, the prime minister, who would not take an oath of allegiance until assured he should never be called upon to act against the prince, Tâmâsp Meerza‡.

The same considerations which made Mahmood endeavour to conciliate the good opinion of his new subjects, induced him to grant every encouragement to the foreigners in Persia. Several European

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 259.

† Krusinski's Memoir, page 258.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 184.

nations had, at this period, factories at Isfahan and Bunder Abbas: these were confirmed in all their privileges, and the Christian missionaries were allowed full liberty to perform publicly the duties of their religion. But this fair prospect was soon clouded: and the occurrence of events, which excited apprehensions for his own safety in the mind of this monarch, banished, in an instant, all his plans of good government, and rendered him one of the most detestable and cruel tyrants that the page of history has recorded.

It will be necessary to take a short view of the events which appear to have effected the change in the measures of Mahmood. He had, soon after he took possession of the capital, and the districts in its immediate vicinity, detached Amân-ûllâh Khan to reduce Kazveen. The force sent with this chief, which amounted to six thousand men*, marched in the depth of winter, when the few troops which the Prince Tâmâsp had been able to collect were dispersed in quarters. It consequently met with no resistance; Kashan, Koom, and all the other cities in its route, surrendered, and Kazveen followed their example. The joy which the news of this easy conquest gave to Mahmood, was checked by intelligence which reached him at the same moment, that an officer† he had sent with a convoy of treasure to Candahar for the purpose of raising new levies among the Affghan tribes, had been attacked, defeated, and plundered, by the governor‡ of a petty fortress in Seistan: and he was also embarrassed at this period by an embassy from Peter the Great

A. D. 1722.
A. H. 1135.

An embassy from Peter the Great.

* MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

† Moollah Moosâh was the name of this officer. The sum he had in charge was one hundred and fifty thousand tomâns, nearly three hundred thousand pounds.

‡ The name of this governor was Meerza Ismail, and the fort was called Bandah.

CHAP. XVI.

of Russia, which had been deputed to Shah Hussein, but addressed him as the actual ruler of Persia, and demanded redress for wrongs which, it was pretended, the Russians had sustained from the conduct of the Persian government.

The Russian government resolves to invade the kingdom of Persia.

The fact was, the Czar had resolved to take advantage of the confusions in Persia to extend the commerce of his kingdom, by making himself master of the western shores of the Caspian. He had, for this purpose, collected an army of thirty thousand of his best soldiers, which was joined by some Cossacks and Calmooks at Astracan. The injuries which his subjects had sustained from the Lesghees at Shâmâkee, and from the Khan of Khaurizm, who had plundered a caravan of Russians coming from China, were the pretexts for those preparations. He went through the form of calling upon the ruler of Persia to redress the wrongs of which he complained: and, when told by Mahmood that he had no power to control either the Usbegs or the Lesghees*, Peter, who commanded his army in person, sailed from the Volga on the twenty-ninth of July, and arrived on the coast of Dâghestan† on the

The czar advances with a large army. A. D. 1722. A. H. 1135.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 186, 7.

† We meet with a full account of the expedition of Peter in the Travels of Mr. P. H. Bruce, who accompanied it. The motives which occasioned the Emperor of Russia to undertake this enterprise, are stated by this writer to have been the desire of avenging the insults and wrongs which his subjects, settled on the shores of the Caspian, had suffered, particularly in the plunder of Shâmâkee; and a desire to succour the King of Persia against the Affghans, who offered important cessions in return for the aid of the Russian monarch. Part of the expedition embarked at Moscow, and falling down the river which flows through that city, entered the larger stream of the Occa, at the Town of Columnia; and a month after they embarked, they arrived at the City of Muni Novogorod, which stands at the conflux of the Occa and the Volga, where

fourth of August. His first step was to issue a proclamation, in which he declared that he had no ambitious design of enlarging his territories, but only meant to protect his subjects in their fair commerce. He proceeded along the coast, defeated some chiefs by whom he was opposed, and took possession of Derbund*. He confirmed the governor of that town in his charge, but left two thousand Russian troops to garrison the citadel. After this conquest, the czar returned to Astracan, which he reached in October, having signified his intention to prosecute his plans in the commencement of the ensuing fair season.

A Turkish army enters Persia.

While the Russians threatened the north-western provinces of Persia, that empire was exposed to a still more formidable attack in another quarter. The Court of Constantinople, as soon as it heard of the situation into which Persia was thrown by the Affghan invasion, hastened to take advantage of its fallen condition. A

the whole of the army destined for Persia was assembled. From thence they proceeded down the Volga to the Caspian, and, after a short and prosperous voyage, thirty-three thousand infantry were landed in the province of Dâghestan, where they were soon joined by a considerable body of cavalry that had marched by land from Astracan.

* The following account is given of this place by Mr. Bruce:

" The City of Derbent, in the province of Shirwan, lies in 41° 51′ north latitude, " and is situated on the shore of the Caspian: the walls are carried into ten feet depth " of water, to prevent any one's passing that way: its length, from east to west, is nearly " five wersts; but its breadth is not proportionable. It is not only the frontier of " Persia, lying on its utmost confines on this side, but may, with great propriety, " be called the gate of it, reaching from the mountain into the sea. The city is " divided into three distinct quarters: the castle, situated upon the top of the moun- " tain, had always a strong Persian garrison. The second, and principal, reaches from " the foot of the mountain to the lower town, which makes the third, and reaches to " the sea-side."—P. H. Bruce's *Travels*, page 283.

CHAP. XVI. large army was assembled on the frontier, which was already on its march to Hamadan, when all sense of alarm at foreign enemies was banished from the mind of Mahmood, by an occurrence which more immediately threatened the destruction of his power.

The inhabitants of Kazveen are chiefly descended from those Turkish tribes which have long pastured their flocks on the plains in the vicinity of that city. They almost all either cultivate the soil, or employ themselves in carrying on commerce with the shores of the Caspian. These habits of life render them hardy and robust; and they are remarkable for having preserved the rude and ungovernable spirit of their ancestors. Among its other privileges, Kazveen has always boasted one of a very extraordinary nature. It may be termed a right of insurrection*, which they resort to in cases of violence and oppression. The lower orders act, on these occasions, under the direction of their magistrates, who seldom proceed to this extremity except when they have no hope of relief from any other proceeding. They could expect no redress, by any application to Mahmood, from the cruelty and injustice of those he had appointed to rule them; and, independent of the oppression they suffered, their religion and prejudices led them to regard the Affghans with peculiar horror†. In consequence of these feelings, the magistrates of Kazveen met secretly; and on the evening of the eighth of January, the signal for a Lootee Bâzâr, or "general insurrection," was given. The Affghans were at once attacked in every quarter.

The inhabitants of Kazveen revolt. A. D. 1723. A. H. 1136.

* They term this Lootee Bâzâr, which literally signifies "plundering the bazars, "or shops;" but it implies no more than a general rising of the inhabitants. This ancient usage is still preserved, and will be noticed hereafter.

† MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

Amân-ûllâh hastened to the Mydân, or "great square," in front of the palace, where he found most of his troops assembled; and, though wounded at an early period, he made every effort that a brave soldier could to subdue this tumult: but he was overpowered by numbers, and compelled to take shelter in the palace; from whence he with difficulty effected his escape by a private road that led to one of the principal gates. The loss of the Affghans on this occasion was about two thousand men, besides all their property. They were forced instantly to retreat to Isfahan; and they suffered so severely on the march from the inclemency of the season, that not more than half of this corps reached that capital.

And overpower the Affghans.

Ashrâff, who had accompanied Amân-ûllâh on this expedition, separated from him on the retreat, and proceeded to Candahar with three hundred men. He appears to have anticipated the downfall of Mahmood: for the example of Kazveen had been followed by Khonsâr*, and several other towns; and the dispirited Affghans retired to Isfahan from every quarter, where their prince received them with a sullen gloom, that foreboded the dreadful means he contemplated to avert those dangers by which he saw himself surrounded.

Ashrâff proceeds to Candahar.

The Affghan prince was certainly, at this moment, in a critical situation. His army was reduced to about fifteen thousand men. With this small force he had to maintain himself in a great king-

Mahmood is in a critical situation.

* This beautiful town, which lies about ninety-two miles to the north-east of Isfahan, is still in a very flourishing state. It stands in a fine and well-watered valley, which is six miles long and three broad, and is almost entirely covered with gardens

CHAP. XVI. dom, by the inhabitants of which he and his people were detested, not only on account of the ravages they had committed, but from the difference of their language, their manners, and their religion. When the reputation of his arms was at the highest, these alarming considerations had operated with great force upon his mind, and had rendered him wavering and undecided even in the moment of victory: now that he saw his bravest troops disheartened, and his enemies elated with triumph, he appears to have become *distracted with* apprehension. The male population of Isfahan and its suburbs alone, was still in a proportion of more than twenty to one to the Affghans. The probable revolt of the capital seemed the most immediate danger, and Mahmood resolved to remove it by measures which could only have occurred to a mind that was as cowardly as it was cruel and savage.

Massacres the Persian nobles and their male children.

On the day of Amân-ûllâh's return, all the Persian ministers and principal lords, except one or two*, were invited to a feast. About three hundred came; and the moment they arrived, the signal was given for their massacre†: not one escaped: and the tyrant was so relentless, that he even refused mercy to a youth of twelve years of age, the son of the Waly of Georgia, who had fled for protection to one of the principal Affghan chiefs, by whom he had been adopted. The bodies of all these nobles were exposed on the grand square before the palace, that the inhabitants might see and tremble. But a

* The prime minister, Mahomed Kooli Khan, was spared, because his brother had assisted the Affghans at Kazveen; and Lootf Aly Khan was not put to death on this occasion.

† This dreadful massacre took place on the twenty-fifth of January, 1723.—KRUSINSKI's *Memoir*, page 263.

more horrid tragedy was yet to be acted. It is the characteristic of guilt to seek safety in greater crime. It was thought, that sons might hereafter desire to revenge the blood of their fathers; and the day after this massacre, the male children of the nobles that had been slain, amounting to upwards of two hundred, were led from their schools, to a field in the vicinity of the city, where they were all inhumanly slaughtered. Mahmood pretended that the nobles had conspired against his life; but his real design of reducing the number of his enemies by extirpation was soon developed*. He had taken three thousand of the guards of Shah Hussein into pay: he directed that these men should be peculiarly well treated; and, as a mark of favour, he commanded that a dinner should be dressed for them in one of the squares of the palace. The moment they were seated a party of Affghans fell upon them, and not one was spared†. But this bloody act proved only the commencement of the horrid scene. An order was issued to the Affghans to put to death every Persian who had ever been in the service of the former government‡; and this climax of cruelty effected what the tyrant desired, the depopulation of the city; which was left, after fifteen days, (the period this massacre lasted,) with a very small proportion of males of a mature age, and even those were obliged to fly, in consequence of a proclamation, which stated, that all were to depart from the capital, except a body of Persian youth, whom Mahmood proposed to train in the habits and usages of his own nation.

Massacre of three thousand of the guards.

A general order to put to death every Persian who had served the former government.

The inhabitants of Isfahan were chiefly tradesmen and manufacturers, and that city had long been the residence of a luxurious and

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 264.

† Krusinski's Memoir, page 264.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 190.

CHAP. XVI.

effeminate court. Its men have always been accounted the most unwarlike in Persia; but it must have been that accumulation of miseries which they endured, that reduced them to the wretched and degraded state of mind in which they appeared during these scenes of blood and horror. It was common, we are told, to see an Affghan leading three and four Persians to execution: and though death was certain, such was the cowardly despondency of the whole population, that not one example occurred of the victims even struggling with their fate*. Mahmood, at this period, threw off the mask of moderation and justice he had before put on. All ranks were pillaged: nor did the factories of foreign nations escape; both the English and Dutch suffered, but particularly the latter, who had amassed a large sum by selling sugar during the distresses of the siege, at an exorbitant rate†. Mahmood forced them to reveal where their treasures were concealed, and took from them to an amount of four hundred thousand crowns. The Indians settled at Isfahan were also plundered; and the Armenians were not only forced to pay another contribution, but several of their chief magistrates were put to death.

A general plunder.

Relieved, by the adoption of these dreadful measures, from his fears regarding the inhabitants of Isfahan, Mahmood proceeded to reduce the country in its neighbourhood. The brave inhabitants of Ben-Isfahan still resisted his arms; and that village, after a gallant defence, made an honourable capitulation, which was guaranteed by the principal Affghan chiefs. Mahmood, who feared openly to violate such a compact, employed secret agents to betray them into a sedition, that might justify him in satiating his vengeance upon those who had murdered his relations. But the honest peasants, who

Ben-Isfahan capitulates.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 190.

† Hanway, Vol. II. page 192.

were as sincere in their allegiance after they had surrendered, as they had been before in their hostility, seized his agents, and sent them bound into Isfahan. The prince was so pleased with this act, that he forgave all they had done: and some months afterwards they repaid the confidence that was placed in them, by seizing Lootf Aly Khan; who, when he fled from court, took shelter in their village.

A. D. 1723. A. H. 1136.

An attempt to repeople Isfahan.

An effort was made by Mahmood to repeople Isfahan; and some Kurdish tribes were invited to occupy the vacant houses of that wretched capital. As they were Soonees, it was expected that a similarity of religion would render them more attached to the Affghan government than the other inhabitants of Persia *. Many of these Kurds were also taken into the army, which required recruits, as but few soldiers had come from Candahar; from whence, however, all the families of the Affghans in Persia had been brought by the policy of Mahmood; who found, before he adopted this measure, that desertions were so frequent, as to threaten a serious diminution of his small numbers. Aided by his new levies, Mahmood succeeded in making himself master of some of the principal cities in Irak †; in almost all of which a part of the inhabitants were massacred, from the same considerations that had led to the horrid scenes at Isfahan.

Mahmood takes some cities in Irak.

Nasser-ûllâh subdues every town in Fars except Shiraz.

Nasser-ûllâh, who had joined Mahmood at Kerman, when he first entered Persia, had been employed to conquer the province of Fars,

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 268.

† Among these were Goolpaigân, Khonsâr, and Kashan. The two latter cities had been surrendered to Amân-ûllâh, but threw off the yoke when that chief was driven out of Kazveen.

CHAP. XVI.

and had succeeded in subduing almost every town in that province, except the capital, Shiraz; in an attack of which he was mortally wounded. His death, which happened a few days afterwards, was not more regretted by the Parsees, or Guebers, than it was by the Affghans, Persians, and Armenians. His own degraded race had found themselves exalted by the character of their chief*. The Affghans admired his valour and experience as a soldier; and both the Persians and Armenians lost, by his fall, a generous and humane protector. The rites performed at his funeral display the barbarous character of those he commanded. His army marched with solemn silence round his body. They then made his slaves and prisoners do the same, and put them all to death at his feet†. They also slew the finest of his horses, whose flesh was dressed, and divided among the soldiers, as a funeral feast. Mahmood mourned his brave general with a sincere grief. He erected a monument to his memory; and although Nasser-ûllâh was a Parsee, and two priests of that religion were employed to keep alive a sacred fire where his body was placed, the Mahomedan Affghans reverenced his remains as those of a saint‡.

His death much regretted.

The rites performed at his funeral.

The command is given to Zubberdust Khan.

The command of the troops in Fars was given to Zubberdust Khan, a soldier of fortune, who had risen, by his courage and conduct, to the highest rank in the Affghan army. Soon after his arrival before Shiraz, a younger brother of Abdûllâ, the Waly of

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 274.

† Krusinski affirms that this is the usage among the Affghans. In this he is, I believe, mistaken. That race may, like the Tartars or Persians, put to death a number of their enemies, to revenge the blood of a chief slain in battle, but not as a funeral ceremony.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 208.

Arabia, endeavoured to throw a large convoy of provisions into the city. He was attacked, and defeated: but this gallant chief, who was in every respect the opposite of his brother, died bravely in the attempt to effect an object, which would, had he succeeded, have compelled the Affghans to retire from Fars. The Governor of Shiraz, seeing no further prospect of relief, desired to capitulate: but, unfortunately, as the terms were adjusting, the principal posts were abandoned. This the Affghans perceived, and suddenly breaking up the conference, made a general assault; and before the Persians could recover from their surprise, the city was taken*, and great numbers were slain: but the sword did not destroy so many as had before perished from famine; and the Affghans revenged the inhabitants upon some of those, whose avarice had increased their misery. We are told of the fate of one person, in whose house an immense quantity of grain was found. A stake was fixed in the centre of his granary, to which he was bound, and left to perish from hunger, amidst that abundance which he had refused to share with his fellow citizens †.

Who attacks and defeats a body of Arabians.

Assaults and takes the City of Shiraz. A. D. 1724. A. H. 1137.

Zubberdust Khan detached a corps to reduce Bunder-Abbas, which had been attacked the year before, by a body of five thousand men, from the neighbouring province of Baloochistan, who had expected to meet with great wealth at this celebrated seaport. They made themselves masters of the town, but were repulsed with loss from the European factories. The detachment from the Affghan army had no better fortune. The Persian inhabitants fled at its approach; but the Europeans showed so resolute a countenance,

Detaches a corps to reduce Bunder-Abbas.

* Shiraz was taken on the thirteenth of April, 1724, after a blockade of eight months.—KRUSINSKI's *Memoir*, page 276. † Krusinski's Memoir, page 277.

CHAP. XVI. that the chief by whom this corps was commanded feared to attack them*. The expedition ended in his accepting a small supply of provisions; and he returned with a force greatly reduced in numbers by the unhealthiness of the climate.

A. D. 1724. A. H. 1136. Mahmood marches against Kohgeeloo.

Mahmood, encouraged by the reduction of Shiraz, had collected an army of thirty thousand men, with which he marched against Kohgeeloo, a country situated about three degrees to the southward of Isfahan: but he was so harassed by the tribes of Arabs who inhabit some of the neighbouring districts, and his troops suffered so much from the great difference of climate which they experienced when they descended into the plains near the sea coast, that he was compelled to retreat without effecting his object. We may judge how sensible he was of the disgrace he had incurred by the failure of this ill-judged expedition, when informed, that he entered his capital at night, and in a private manner.

Is unsuccessful.

It has been before stated, that the Affghan prince had recruited his army by enrolling a number of Kurds in his ranks, but he continued to look with anxiety for reinforcements from Candahar. This long expected party at length arrived †, but their numbers were few. A report had been spread among the inhabitants of his native province that he had become avaricious, that he neglected his bravest soldiers, and that he had not only adopted the manners of the Persians, but was secretly inclined to the heresy of that nation. These sentiments had become very general in his army; and they

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 277.

† The mother of Mahmood arrived with this caravan: and the Persians, accustomed to royal state, were astonished to see the mother of their sovereign riding astride on a camel through the streets of Isfahan.

were increased into mutinous clamour by the failure of an attack that he made upon the City of Yezd; from which he was repulsed with great loss. To add to his embarrassment, the two principal Affghan chiefs, Ashrâff and Amân-ûllâh, were known to be discontented. Mahmood had been forced by the soldiers to recall the former*, (who had, after the insurrection at Kazven, proceeded to Candahar,) and to declare him his successor. The latter † had also

Mahmood is forced to declare Amân-ûllâh his successor.

* When Mahmood first ascended the throne of the degraded Hussein, he was thrown into consternation by the desertion of his cousin Ashrâff. This youth was the son of Meer Abdûllâ, whom Mahmood had slain, and had always been an object of jealousy to that ruler; but his life was defended by the attachment of the Affghans, and the new monarch of Persia feared to provoke the resentment of his own tribe. He thought, at one period, that he had found an opportunity of accomplishing the object of ruining Ashrâff without risk to himself. The post which that youth defended was forced by Tâmâsp Meerza, when that prince effected his escape from Isfahan. On this occurrence he assembled all the Affghan chiefs, and endeavoured to rouse their indignation against a commander, whom he represented as having, by his cowardice and bad conduct, exposed them to all the fatigues and dangers of a long and protracted siege. Ashrâff repelled the charge with that freedom which the usages of his nation permitted, and showed that his post had been so weakened, that it was impossible he could resist the superior numbers by whom he was attacked. It was established, by undeniable evidence, that he had done all that valour could to prevent the prince's escape, and that those only were to blame who had deprived him of the means of success, by detaching the men under his command to other quarters. He was acquitted by the unanimous voice of the assembled chiefs; and Mahmood had the mortification to find his ill-judged attack had increased the reputation and popularity of him whom he desired to ruin.—Krusinski's *Memoir*.

† Amân-ûllâh's professed cause of discontent was personal disappointment. It is generally believed that Mahmood had promised to share all his conquests with this ambitious and able chief, to whose valour and judgment he had been greatly indebted for his success.

CHAP. XVI. left him to return to his native country; and though a reconciliation had taken place, it was not sincere. So situated, he could repose no confidence in his army, and it became every day more evident that he had as much to dread from his own tribe, as from his enemies.

Mahmood has recourse to Tâpâssâ. A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137.

The mind of Mahmood proved unequal to the great difficulties with which he was at this period assailed; and after his return from the unsuccessful expedition to Yezd, he had recourse to an expedient for the recovery of his affairs, which displayed the weakest superstition, if it was not, as many believed it to be, the effect of mental derangement*. The usage of Tâpâssâ, or abstraction of the soul from the contemplation of all sublunary objects till it becomes absorbed in the Divinity, has spread from India over all the nations of Asia: and the Persian Sooffee, the Mahomedan Faquir, and Hindoo Joghee, or Sunnâsee, vie with each other in efforts to subdue nature by rigid austerities. It is the habit of these ascetics to remain for days almost without food †, with their minds fixed upon one object, pronouncing the mysterious name of God, till they become inspired, or rather, till they mistake the wanderings of imagination, which are the consequence of their corporeal sufferings, for heavenly inspirations. This superstition is common with the Affghans; and their distracted sovereign had now recourse to it, in the hope that he might obtain divine aid, to extricate him from the dangers with which he saw himself surrounded. He chose a dark subterraneous vault for this extraordinary penance; and, during fourteen or fifteen days that he remained there, he took hardly any sustenance. When he

Its usage described.

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 290.

† A small portion of dry bread and water is sometimes allowed to the person performing Tâpâssâ.

CHAP. XVI.

State of Mahmood after the Tâpâssâ.

came again into the light his countenance was shrunk and pale, his body emaciated, and the wild stare of his eyes gave reason to conclude, that his mind, if before sane, had not been able to stand the severe trial to which it had been exposed. He appears to have been reduced to the lowest state of nervous weakness, and became so restless and suspicious, that he started at the approach of his best friends, evidently thinking every man who came near him meant to take his life *. While in this miserable and wretched state, intelligence was brought to him, that Suffee Meerza, the eldest son of Shah Hussein, had escaped from Isfahan: and, before this report was discovered to be false, he had issued a fatal mandate for the destruction of all the males of the royal family of Persia, except Shah Hussein. These victims were assembled in one of the courts of the palace; and the tyrant, attended by two or three favourites, commenced, with his own sabre, the horrid massacre. A Persian author † informs us, that thirty-nine princes of the blood were murdered upon this dreadful occasion. Their numbers are said, by European writers, to have been much greater: and one ‡ of these relates, that among them were two of the youngest sons of Hussein, who fled to their father for protection. He sheltered them in his arms; but Mahmood advanced, with fury demanded their blood, and struck at one of them with his dagger. The arm of Hussein received the wound; and the Affghan prince, savage as he was, could not but shrink with horror at seeing the blood of a monarch whom he had been accustomed to behold and treat with reverence. This occurrence, it is said ||, checked his rage, and he spared the children.

Massacre of all the males of the royal family. A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137.

* Krusinski's Memoir, page 290.

† Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

‡ Krusinski's Memoir, page 291.

|| Krusinski's Memoir, page 291.

CHAP. XVI.

Mahmood becomes insane.

The effect which this last act of Mahmood had upon his own mind was shocking. His reason was completely unsettled, and he became outrageously mad*. The Affghan and Persian physicians tried in vain to restore him: resort was even had to the Armenian clergy †, and their prayers were offered upon the head of the royal maniac; but the malady increased: and as the Affghans were threatened by an attack of the Persian prince, Tâmâsp, they elected Ashrâff ‡ to be their ruler, before Mahmood expired. It is asserted, that the miserable existence of that prince was shortened by a few hours ||, that his successor might enjoy the satisfaction of having slain the murderer of his father: but other and more probable accounts say, that Mahmood died in a state of the most dreadful insanity: and we are informed by one author §, that his mother,

Death of Mahmood.

* Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen states, that he went mad, and not only tore off his own flesh, but ate it.

† There can be no ground whatever to doubt this fact. Hanway mentions it, as well as the respectable author whom I have generally followed in this part of the history, who details the particulars of this extraordinary ceremony.—KRUSINSKI'S *Memoir*, page 150.

Voltaire, when noticing this fact, and some others equally true, entitles them "*Persian Tales*[1], *circulated by Monks*:" but the bigoted philosopher evidently discredits them for no other reason than because *they were narrated by monks*.

‡ This prince mounted the throne the twenty-second of April, 1725.

|| Krusinski states, that Ashrâff would not allow himself to be placed upon the throne till the head of Mahmood was brought to him; and that he ordered several of the ministers, and some of the most attached followers of that prince, to be put to death.—KRUSINSKI'S *Memoir*, page 296.

§ MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

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[1] Voltaire's Works, Vol. VIII. page 572.

when she saw that his situation was hopeless, directed that he should be smothered, that his sufferings might cease.

His character and government.

A great conquest had, perhaps, never been effected with less means than those possessed by Mahmood: and this fact might lead to a conclusion, that all deficiencies were supplied by the energy and greatness of his mind: but this prince, who had early repaired the disadvantages of a bad frame of body by exercise and temperance, had no more than the common qualities of a chief of a savage tribe. He possessed personal courage, and was active and vigilant. He is said to have taken pride in being a strict observer of his word when that was pledged: but he appears to have combined in his character the most consummate deceit with the most ferocious barbarity. The empire of the Suffavean kings, when he attacked it, was like a vast fabric tottering to its fall. It was overthrown by the deplorable weakness of its sovereign; the baseness of a superstitious and corrupt court; the effeminacy and treachery of disaffected nobles; and the cowardice of an unwarlike and discontented people. We find the chief, at whose slight touch this immense structure fell to the ground, trembling at his own success, and alarmed at the magnitude of the ruins by which he saw himself surrounded: and though we discover, when he first ascended the throne of Persia, a gleam of that greatness which almost justifies conquest, as it brings happiness to those it has subdued; his conduct, on this occasion, appears to have been only an artful expedient to lull into security his intended victims; or, at the best, a weak effort of virtue, in which he had not the fortitude to persevere. The means which he latterly adopted to secure himself on the throne he had seized, are perhaps the most horrid recorded in history, and have

CHAP. XVI. justly consigned his memory to universal execration. Dreadful as are the ravages and massacres of all conquerors, they are often, in a slight degree, palliated by generous and great actions: and we view with astonishment, if not with admiration, the red track of a Chenghiz Khan, or a Timour: but we must turn, with an unmixed feeling of horror and disgust, from a series of bloody massacres committed to quiet the fears of a savage ruler, who knew no way of preserving himself in that power which he had obtained by violence, except by the destruction of those who had submitted to his authority. But if the deep crimes of the Persian court were punished by the visitation of such an enemy, the dreadful close of Mahmood's life exhibits a scene as terrible as retributive justice could exact. He died under the most excruciating tortures of mind and body, in the prime of his youth, and the commencement of his reign: for he had hardly attained his twenty-seventh year, and had only enjoyed the throne of Persia for the short period of three years.

Ashrâff succeeds Mahmood.

Mahmood was succeeded by his cousin, Ashrâff, the son of Meer Abdûllah, and nephew of Meer Vais. But, before we relate the events of this prince's reign, it will be useful to take a view of the condition of Persia, and of the designs against that kingdom which were cherished, at this period, by the courts of Constantinople and Petersburgh.

Tâmâsp assumes the name and state of a king.

Tâmâsp, the son of Sultan Hussein, had, from the day of his father's imprisonment, assumed the name and state of a king: but his efforts to regain the crown of his ancestors were weak and inefficient. He succeeded in exciting the ruler of Kaket* to attack

* This province lies about half a degree to the N.E. of Teflis, the capital of Georgia.

Vâctângâh*, the disobedient Waly of Georgia: but the success of this enterprise had only aided the Turkish government in their design upon that province, which they seized, while Ghilan, and the Town of Baku, left equally defenceless, fell into the hands of the Russians. The Persian prince had endeavoured, at different periods, to negotiate with both the Turkish and Russian courts. His ambassador to Constantinople had been stopped at Kars†: but Ismail Beg, the envoy whom he sent to Petersburgh, had reached that capital, and was with the Czar when Baku surrendered. This minister succeeded in concluding a treaty, by which it was stipulated‡, that the Emperor of Russia should expel the Affghans, and establish Tâmâsp upon the throne of Persia: in return for which service, the Persian prince agreed to cede, in perpetuity, to the Russian monarch the towns of Derbund and Baku, with the provinces of Dâghestan||, Shirwan, Ghilan, Mazenderan, and Asterabad. There were some subordinate articles of this treaty relative to the supply of the Russian army while acting in Persia, and the future extension of the commerce between the two nations.

Concludes a treaty with Russia.

While these negotiations were carrying on at Petersburgh, the Turks were actively employed in extending their conquests. All Kurdistan had acknowledged their authority; and the *fall* of

The Turks conquer several provinces.

* Klaproth calls this prince Wachtang the Fifth. He fled first to the Turkish territories, and afterwards took shelter in those of Russia.

† According to an historian of Turkey, he afterwards made his way to Constantinople; but that court refused to receive him as an envoy: and when he made his proposals like a petitioner, they were rejected.—HAWKINS' *Ottoman Empire*, Vol. IV. page 272.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 203.

|| Klaproth, p. 198.

CHAP. XVI.

Erivân, Khooe*, Nukshevan, and Maragha, made them masters of the whole of Armenia, and great part of Aderbijan. The brave inhabitants of Tabreez, who are of the same class as those of Kazveen, though part of their city was in ruins from an earthquake, disdained to submit† to a foe, who, from the rancour of religious bigotry, and the intoxication of success, committed the most cruel ravages wherever they subdued; and the Pâchâ of Van, who commanded an army of twenty-four thousand Turks, was astonished to find himself opposed by the inhabitants of a city which had neither walls nor cannon to defend it. He ordered a general storm, and his army obtained possession of one quarter of the town: but the inhabitants, nowise intimidated by this success, barricaded all the other streets; and not only succeeded in separating the body of Turks, who had entered the town, from the main army, but cut the whole of the former, who were four thousand in number, to pieces‡. The Turkish leader, irritated at this loss, made several attacks, but with no better success than the first; and he was at last compelled to make a precipitate retreat, leaving many stragglers, and his sick and wounded, to the fury of an enraged people, by whom

They are opposed by the inhabitants of Tabreez.

And compelled to retreat.

* "This city is twenty-two fursungs from Tabreez. It is the capital of a rich and "extensive district, and the emporium of a considerable trade carried on between "Turkey and Persia. It contains, according to Captain Sutherland, a population of "twenty-five thousand souls; and is situated on a plain, famous for a battle fought "in 1514 between Shah Ismail and Selim the First. There is no town in Persia better "built, or more beautiful, than Khooe: the walls are in good repair; the streets are "regular, shaded with avenues of trees; and the ceilings of many of the houses are "painted with infinite taste."—KINNIER's *Memoir*, page 154.

† MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen. ‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 213.

CHAP. XVI.

they were all massacred*. The moment the Turks heard of this act of cruelty, they retaliated upon the inhabitants of the defenceless villages in Aderbijan. The citizens of Tabreez hastened to the relief of their countrymen; and the Pâchâ, confident of victory in the field, met them with eight thousand men: he was, however, completely defeated; and, after losing nearly the whole of his detachment, fled to Khooe.

The Turks are again defeated with great loss.

The Court of Constantinople, when they learnt these occurrences, sent an army of fifty thousand men against Tabreez: the brave inhabitants of which, the moment they heard of its approach, removed a great number of their women and children into the mountains of Ghilan, and prepared for an obstinate defence. Their imprudent ardour led them to meet their numerous enemies in the field: but though they had courage, they had no order. The superior discipline of their enemies prevailed, after a long and bloody battle, over their valour, and they fled in confusion into their city. The Turks pursued, and anticipated a complete victory; but they found every street defended; and it was not till after an action, almost incessantly continued for four days and nights, that the besieged would consent to capitulate†. When, however, they saw that further resistance was vain, and that there was no hope of relief, they agreed to surrender, on condition of being permitted to retire to Ardebil. The terms required were readily granted: "and these "brave men," to use the words of a cotemporary author ‡, "taking

The Persians are defeated, after an obstinate battle.

3d August, A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137. They resign Tabreez, and proceed, with their families, to Ardebil.

* MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

† Turkish historians state, that there were twenty thousand men marched out. The Persians say only five.

‡ Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

CHAP. XVI. "those of their families who remained in one hand, and their swords "in the other, retreated, with a sullen pride, through the ranks of an "admiring enemy. Persian history," observes the same writer, "affords no instance of superior valour to that displayed by the citizens "of Tabreez on this memorable occasion." Nearly thirty thousand men had fallen in the siege; and they left to their conquerors a city without one inhabitant, which had been gained by the loss of more than twenty thousand of the bravest soldiers in the Turkish army, and some of their most distinguished leaders*: among the latter were the Pâchâs of Ourfa and Caramania.

The Turks make further conquests. A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137.

The City of Gunjah, which had before successfully resisted the Turks, was taken this year, and a force †, which had succeeded in subduing the country of Kermanshah, was advanced within a few marches of Isfahan, when it was compelled to retire to defend the territories of Bagdad, which were suddenly invaded by the Waly of Laristan ‡.

These events took place in the latter years of the reign of Mahmood: but so little consideration appears to have been given

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 236.

† Ahmed, the Pâchâ of Bagdad, commanded this force.

‡ "The small province of Laristan extends along the northern shore of the Gulf, "from the fifty-fifth degree of east longitude to the fifty-eighth. It has Fars to the "north-west, and Kerman to the north-east. This is the poorest and least productive "province in Persia. It is diversified with plains and mountains, which extend to the "sea. The country is so arid, and so destitute of wholesome water, that, were it not "for the periodical rains, which fill the cisterns of the natives, and enable them to "cultivate the date tree, together with a small quantity of wheat and barley, it would "be quite uninhabitable."—KINNIER's *Memoir*, page 81.

CHAP. XVI.

A. D. 1725.
A. H. 1138.

either to the power of that prince, or to the pretensions of Shah Tâmâsp, that a partition treaty* of some of the finest provinces of Persia was actually concluded between the Emperors of Russia and Constantinople†. This engagement, we are told, was brought about through the mediation of the French ambassador‡ at the Porte. The occurrence of some extraordinary events prevented its ever being carried into execution; but its stipulations nevertheless merit the most serious consideration, as they show the nature of the ambitious projects of both states at a period when circumstances so completely favoured their execution ‖. The boundaries of the Russian provinces in Persia were fixed by a line which gave that state all the provinces on the Caspian, from the country of the Turkomans to the conflux of the rivers Kur § and Araxes. The possessions of Turkey were bounded by a line which commenced at the latter point, and stretching to within three miles of Ardebil, went by Tabreez to Hamadan, and from thence to Kermanshah; all of which towns, and the whole of the provinces between the line and the Turkish frontier,

A partition treaty concluded between the courts of Constantinople and Russia.

Stipulations of the treaty.

* Peace between Russia and the Porte had been concluded a year before this partition treaty was settled.

† Hanway, Vol. II. page 217, 8.

‡ Marquess Bannac, the French ambassador at the Porte, had the merit of negotiating this treaty between the courts of Petersburgh and Constantinople.

‖ This treaty was signed on the eighth of July 1725, and ratified by both sovereigns.—Hanway, Vol. II. page 218.

§ Hawkins, in his History of the Ottoman Empire, states, that this treaty contained six articles. In the preamble, the cession made by Tâmâsp to Russia of the provinces on the shores of the Caspian was recognised: the limits between Turkey and Russia were fixed by a line drawn at sixty-six miles distance from the Caspian at Dâghestan, passing at a like distance from Derbund, and ending at the confluence of the Kur and Araxes.—Hawkins' *Ottoman Empire*, Vol. IV. page 277.

CHAP. XVI. were to be alienated from Persia, and taken possession of by the Emperor of Constantinople. These provinces were mutually guaranteed to each other by the contracting parties; and it was stipulated, that if Tâmâsp agreed to the terms, he should receive such aid as would enable him to establish his power over the other provinces of Persia: if he refused his assent, they determined to seize the countries specified, and to provide for the future tranquillity of Persia, by elevating the person they might deem most deserving of it to the throne of that kingdom*: but it was agreed that they should, on no occasion, listen to any overtures from Mahmood, as they appear to have deemed the establishment of the Affghans in Persia irreconcileable with the projects they had formed†.

A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137. Ashrâff, on ascending the throne of Persia, put several of the nobles to death.

When Ashrâff became their sovereign, the Affghans were confident that his temper, activity, and valour, would enable them to overcome all their enemies. His first measures, however, showed that he dreaded the leaders of his own tribe more than the Persians; and by putting to death the good and generous Almâs, the commander of the guards of Mahmood, on account of his attachment to that prince and the ambitious Amân-ûllâh, and several other chiefs, whose only crime was joining in a confederacy to raise him to the throne before his predecessor expired, he plainly showed‡ that he was indifferent what pretext he used to rid himself of turbulent and haughty chiefs whose influence he dreaded, and whose immense wealth|| (which was all confiscated,) filled the royal coffers.

* Hawkins' Ottoman Empire, Vol. IV. p. 278. † Hanway, Vol. II. p. 218.

‡ Krusinski's Memoir, page 303.

|| The fortune of Amân-ûllâh is said to have been equal to that of his sovereign.

The inhabitants of Isfahan saw, with satisfaction, the death of their oppressors: and Ashrâff conciliated their good opinion by the public manner in which he testified his horror at the last act of Mahmood's reign. The mother of the deceased monarch was compelled to remain one night in the square with the bodies of the Persian princes who had been massacred by her cruel son. These were afterwards put in coffins, and sent, with funeral pomp, to the City of Koom, where they were interred. The artful Affghan, while he publicly deprecated the crimes of his predecessor, pretended that he could never assume a crown obtained by such guilt: he laid it at the feet of the unfortunate Hussein, and entreated him to resume his right. The captive monarch refused, declaring he was more happy in retirement than ever he had been upon the throne; and the farce ended in his appearing to compel the Affghan chief to place the diadem upon his own head*.

Invites Tâmâsp to Isfahan.

Ashrâff, before he succeeded to power, invited Tâmâsp to come to Isfahan. That weak and unfortunate prince, after several vain efforts to establish his authority in Aderbijan and Irak, had retired to Mazenderan, where he was supported by Futteh Aly Khan †. Pleased with the prospect of a division among his enemies, he advanced towards the capital: but the death of Mahmood made a most serious alteration in the views of Ashrâff, who, however, still pretended friendship, in the hope of being able to seize the person of the legitimate prince of the country. His art was so well employed

* Krusinski's Memoir, Part II. page 163.

† The Turkish tribe, of which Futteh Aly Khan was chief, had been long settled in Persia; and a considerable branch of them were planted at Asterabad, to defend that quarter against the inroads of the Turkomans.

CHAP. XVI. to effect this object, that he must have succeeded, if some secret friends had not conveyed intelligence to Tâmâsp of his design. The prince escaped; and Ashrâff put to death the few remaining Persian nobles at Isfahan, on the pretext that they were in correspondence with his enemies*.

Tâmâsp escapes, but the Persian nobles are put to death.

The successor† of Peter the Great appeared resolved to prosecute the plans which that sovereign had formed against Persia: but the conquests of Russia on the shores of the Caspian bore no proportion to what had been made by the Turks, who, masters of almost the whole of the provinces assigned to them by the partition treaty, called upon the Russians to aid in expelling the Affghans from Persia‡. Ashrâff had sent an ambassador to Constantinople; and that court was not a little embarrassed by the voice of the Oulamâh, or "order of priesthood," who exclaimed against the crime of leaguing with a Christian power against Mahomedans, and the still greater one of making war upon a Soonee monarch for the purpose of restoring to power a dynasty of heretic princes. Though the ministers satisfied the Oulamâh that the connexion formed with Russia was dictated by necessity, and that Ashrâff had placed himself in the condition of an enemy, by refusing to acknowledge the supremacy of the Turkish emperor as religious head of all Mahomedans, still the war was unpopular; and the Affghan prince took every step that could tend to increase a general feeling so favourable to his interests‖. After the ambassador of Ashrâff had been dismissed from the Turkish capital, hostilities were commenced; and Ahmed Pâchâ, who had made himself master of

A. D. 1725. A. H. 1137.

Ashrâff sends an embassy to Constantinople.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 234.

† Catherine the First.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 235.

‖ Hanway, Vol. II. page 244.

Maragha and Kazveen, advanced towards Isfahan. Prince Dalgarouki, who commanded the Russian troops on the coast of the Caspian, made no movement to support the Turks: and Tâmâsp remained in Mazenderan the neutral spectator of a contest for his dominions.

CHAP. XVI.

A. D. 1726. A. H. 1138. The Turks take Maragha and Kazveen, and advance to Isfahan.

The first year of Ashrâff's reign was occupied in strengthening his internal government, and in building a small square fort * with lofty walls, defended by bastions, in the centre of the City of Isfahan, as a place of security for his own family, and those of his Affghan followers. When he learnt that a numerous Turkish army was on its march towards his capital, he laid waste the country on the route upon which they were moving, and advanced, with all the force he could assemble, to endeavour to impede their progress. A corps of two thousand Turks had been misled by an ignorant guide to a distance from the main army. Ashrâff by a rapid march came up with this body, and cut it to pieces before it could receive support †. This success gave confidence to his troops, and greatly discouraged his enemies, whose general immediately halted, and surrounded his camp with entrenchments. The Affghan prince had from the first made every effort to persuade the Turkish soldiery that the war in which they were engaged was unlawful ‡. His private emissaries were at this period most actively employed in disseminating these opinions, and in corrupting the integrity of the Kurdish chiefs who had joined the Ottomans; and, to give more effect to these intrigues, he sent a

A. D. 1726. A. H. 1138.

Ashrâff defeats the Turks

Creates dissensions among his enemies.

* This citadel remains, and is, to this day, called the Fort of Ashrâff.

† This action took place about sixty miles from Isfahan.

‡ Hawkins's Ottoman Empire, Vol. IV. page 290.

CHAP. XVI.

Sends a deputation to the Turkish camp.

deputation of four priests, who were alike venerable for their age and character, to the Pâchâ's camp. When these holy men were introduced to the general, one of them exclaimed, with a loud voice, "Our sovereign, Ashrâff, bade me ask why you war upon Mahomedans, who have obeyed the divine precepts of the law, in "subverting the power of heretic Sheahs? Why you league with "a Christian prince to deprive a follower of our holy prophet "of a kingdom, to which he has, by all laws, human and divine, "such just rights? If you continue, by such injustice, to compel "your brethren to defend themselves, on your head be all the blood "that is shed." Ahmed Pâchâ, who saw that this speech (which was delivered in the most solemn tone,) had made a great impression, immediately answered: "I came here by command of my "sovereign, who is not only a temporal monarch, but the true "successor of the caliphs; and consequently the spiritual head of all "orthodox Mahomedans. Ashrâff must acknowledge him as such, "or he will feel the force of his arms!" Before the conference had terminated, the sound for prayer was heard, and the venerable deputies of Ashrâff joined with the Turkish officers in their devotions, which they concluded by repeating aloud an earnest petition to the Almighty, that he would turn the hearts of true believers from disunion and war, and establish peace and harmony among those who truly served him*.

Their success.

After this act of artful piety, the deputies retired. Their mission was attended with all the effect that Ashrâff could have expected. A general impression was made in favour of his cause; and a large body of Kurds†, accompanied by some Turks, followed

* Hanway, Vol. II. p. 249.

† Hanway, Vol. II. page 249.

the Affghan priests, declaring, that they would not fight against the dictates of their conscience *, and the laws of their religion. Ahmed Pâchâ saw that he had no remedy to prevent that discontent which had been excited among his troops becoming general, except by hastening an action. This he was further encouraged to by his great superiority of numbers: his army consisted of sixty thousand men, and he had seventy pieces of cannon. The Affghans had not more than half this force; and their artillery was forty swivels, mounted on camels. The Turks were, however, defeated, with the loss of twelve thousand men; and the route would have been complete, had not the policy of Ashrâff recalled his men from the pursuit of an enemy with whom he desired peace, not war; and who could, he knew, if provoked to a great exertion, overwhelm him with their armies †.

An action, in which the Turks are defeated.

The Turkish general was obliged, after this defeat, to retire towards Kermanshah, leaving a part of his artillery, and almost all his baggage, to the Affghans. He was rather accompanied than pursued by his conquerors; for Ashrâff would not even allow his men to plunder the stragglers: and when Ahmed Pâchâ left Kermanshah and fell back on Bagdad, the Affghan prince sent another ‡ deputation to his camp with a message, intimating, that he did not deem the spoils he had taken from misguided Mahomedans as lawful; and, as he considered himself a prince, not a robber, Ahmed Pâchâ might send for his treasures and property, and that every thing belonging to him, or those under his command, except arms, should be scrupu-

Ashrâff sends another deputation to the Turks.

* Hawkins's Ottoman Empire, Vol. IV. p. 292.

† Hanway, Vol. II. p. 250.

‡ Hawkins's Ottoman Empire, Vol. IV. p. 293.

CHAP. XVI. lously restored. Ashrâff not only performed what he promised, but released all the prisoners he had made during the war: and by this wise moderation he became so popular throughout the Turkish dominions, that the Court of Constantinople was compelled to conclude a peace, by which it was stipulated, that Ashrâff should acknowledge the grand signior as the spiritual head of the Mahomedans*: in return for which, he was recognised as sovereign of Persia. The provinces which the Turkish government possessed were granted in perpetuity†. This included the whole of Kurdistan and Khuzistan, a part of Aderbijan, and several cities in Irak‡. There were in this treaty other articles which related to the restoration of cannon and military stores taken during the war, and the right of Ashrâff to send annually a caravan with pilgrims to Mecca. The Affghan prince could not, in the situation of his affairs, have expected to make a better treaty than he did. Throughout the whole of his contest with the Turks he had displayed the most consummate ability; and we are at a loss which to admire most, his valour and military skill, or that moderation and wisdom, by which he obliged a haughty and powerful court to acknowledge his title to the throne of the Suffavean monarchs.

With whom he concludes a peace.

The settlement of the war with the Turks gave Ashrâff leisure to prepare against more serious dangers. That prince had made an ineffectual attempt to obtain possession of Candahar, which was held by the brother of the deceased Mahmood. This failure had created a division among the Ghiljee Affghans, which seemed likely to

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 253. † Hanway, Vol. II. page 254.

‡ Among these were Sultaneah and Teheran, the present capital of Persia.

prevent those in Persia from being in future reinforced, even by their own tribe. Malick Mahmood, the Governor of Seistan, had proclaimed himself a king, and had gained possession of almost all Khorassan, except Herat, which formed a separate and independent principality under the chief of the Abdâllee Affghans.

Tâmâsp fixes his court at Ferrâhâbâd, and is joined by Nâdir Kooli and Futteh Aly Khan.
A. D. 1727.
A. H. 1139.

The Suffavean prince, Tâmâsp, was in Mazenderan, supported by the Kujurs of Asterabad. The plague, which had been raging for some time in that province, had swept away a number of those who remained attached to his fortunes: but his prospects had again improved; and he had fixed his small court at Ferrâhâbâd, where he was joined by Nâdir Kooli; a chief who had raised himself by his bold actions into the highest repute for valour and enterprise: and though Tâmâsp had been justly incensed at Nâdir, who had slain his own uncle, the chief of Kelât, the young hero had effaced all memory of that crime, by the recent defeat of a body of Affghans, and the recovery from that race of the important city and district of Nishapore*. The accession of strength which the junction of Nâdir gave Tâmâsp, enabled that prince to act upon the offensive. Nâdir brought five thousand men, and Futteh Aly Khan Kujur had three thousand. The high reputation of the chiefs by whom this force was commanded soon increased its numbers. Recruits flocked from all quarters to the only standard that promised relief to Persia from the intolerable oppression of a foreign yoke.

The first enterprise of the royal army was against Mushed, then under the rule of the chief of the Affghan tribe of Abdâllee. When on the march to Khorassan, Nâdir Kooli, impatient of a rival, put to

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 263.

CHAP. XVI.

Nâdir Kooli puts Futteh Aly Khan to death.

Mushed and Herat reduced.

death Futteh Aly Khan, on the pretext of that chief's corresponding with the enemy. Tâmâsp, who seems to have approved of this act, immediately invested Nâdir with the sole command. Both Mushed and Herat were reduced: and, in this season, the whole of Khorassan was compelled to recognise Tâmâsp as the legitimate sovereign of Persia*. Honours were heaped upon the man who had effected this great revolution in the fortunes of his prince: and Nâdir, who had been before made captain of the guards, now received the name of Tâmâsp Kooli Khan, which signifies "the "slave of Tâmâsp;" an appellation that gratified the vanity of the monarch, as it implied the devoted submission of a powerful chief, while it served the purpose of the favourite, by promoting his object, which was to disclaim the appearance of power, that he might more securely attain the substance.

Ashrâff, who had succeeded in taking Yezd, and whose ambassador had just been received at Constantinople with the highest honours, had hardly begun to enjoy his good fortune, when he was awakened by the reports of the great successes that had attended the arms of Shah Tâmâsp in Khorassan. Though the name of that monarch had long excited the contempt of his enemies, this great change in his fortune could not be regarded with indifference; and the preparations of the Affghan prince showed that he had a just sense of the nature of that danger by which he was threatened. He assembled all the force he could collect; and his army is said to have amounted to thirty thousand men, of which more than one half were Affghans. Small garrisons were left in the principal cities of the

Ashrâff assembles all his forces.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 268.

empire, and a number of the male inhabitants of these were ordered to retire upon pain of death. This want of confidence not only weakened the power of Ashrâff by spreading the impression of his fears, but strengthened the ranks of his enemy with men full of resentment, who were ardent to return as conquerors to those habitations from which they had been banished by the timid policy of an alarmed tyrant.

The experience of Nâdir prevented the prince he served from marching to Isfahan. He expected that Ashrâff would advance into Khorassan, and was aware of all the advantages of carrying on the war in that province. Nor was he mistaken. The Affghan prince hastened to attack a foe who he knew was adding daily to his numbers. The armies met near the Town of Dâmghân: and the Affghans, who were accustomed to put the Persians to flight by their savage yells, could not be restrained from an instant attack: but the troops of Nâdir received the shock in so firm a manner, that they were compelled to fall back. Ashrâff immediately directed two divisions of his army to make a circuit to the right and left, and attack the Persians in the flank and rear; while he made another charge with the main body on their front. But the experienced eye of Nâdir Kooli saw and defeated all these attacks: and when the Affghans were driven back in every direction, he ordered a general charge, which was completely successful. This victory* was obtained with a very trifling loss on the part of the Persians; but the Affghans suffered severely, and the whole

A. D. 1729.
A. H. 1141.

Attacks the Persians.

The Affghans are defeated.

* This battle was fought on the second of October, 1729.—HANWAY, Vol. II. page 274.

CHAP. XVI. of their camp and baggage fell into the hands of their enemies. Their flight must have been extremely precipitate, as a great proportion of their army arrived at Teheran on the second day after the action, a distance of nearly two hundred miles from the field of battle. From that city they proceeded, by hasty marches, to Isfahan; and Ashrâff, the moment he arrived at the capital, ordered all his tribe to repair, with their families and effects, into the new fort which he had built for their protection. After leaving a garrison to defend this important post, where his own wealth was also lodged, he marched out, with as large a force as he could bring together, to a strong position*, some distance to the northward of Isfahan, where he fortified his encampment, with an evident resolution to put every thing to hazard upon the fate of one battle.

Tâmâsp is anxious to proceed to Isfahan.

Tâmâsp, who had, from the day his father resigned the crown, assumed the name of King of Persia, thought himself certain, after the victory he had gained at Dâmghân, of ascending the throne of his ancestors, and anxiously desired to proceed to Isfahan: but his ambitious general was alarmed, lest the sight of a victorious prince entering that capital as a conqueror should eclipse his own glory, and obtain Tâmâsp a personal power that might frustrate his future schemes of aggrandizement. He, therefore, persuaded the young monarch that it was more advisable he should remain at Dâmghân, attended by five or six thousand men, and allow him to advance against Ashrâff. As all his arguments appeared to proceed from solicitude for the royal person, and Tâmâsp had no suspicion of

Is persuaded to desist from his intention.

* This position was near the village of Moortchâ Koor, which is situated at the distance of little more than thirty miles north of Isfahan.

his secret designs, he succeeded in his object; and marched, unaccompanied by the court, to encounter the enemies of his country. At every stage of his advance his army received reinforcements. All ranks anticipated the downfal of the Affghans, and all were anxious to have a share in the victory over their barbarous oppressors. Nâdir was too sensible of the advantage he derived from these impressions to check the ardour which they inspired; and though he found Ashrâff strongly entrenched, he determined to make an instant attack on his lines. These were defended with valour; but nothing could resist the numbers and fury of the assailants. The loss of the Persians was not great, but the Affghans left four thousand of their bravest men on the field of battle*. They fled into the City of Isfahan, which they did not reach till after sunset. It was at first proclaimed that they had obtained a victory; but the loud wailings from the citadel, raised by their women, soon told the real result of the battle. The night was passed in preparations for flight from a capital which it was impossible to defend. Their old men, women, and children, were mounted upon mules and camels; and, after they had packed up all the treasure and spoil they could carry, they departed before break of day towards Shiraz, by a route distant from that on which the Persian army was expected to advance. The rage and despair of the Affghans were so great, that a massacre of the inhabitants was expected. If, however, they ever cherished this intention, which is doubtful, there was no time to put it in execution: but the remorseless Ashrâff, before he fled, stained his hands with

CHAP. XVI.

Nâdir Kooli marches to encounter the Affghans.

A. D. 1729.
A. H. 1141.
Over whom he obtains a victory.

The Affghans retreat towards Shiraz.
A. D. 1729.
A. H. 1141.

* This action was fought on the thirteenth of November.—HANWAY, Vol. II. page 276.

CHAP. XVI.

Shah Hussein is murdered.

the blood of the unfortunate Shah Hussein; a monarch whose misfortunes were greater than his crimes, — an eulogy that can be given to few Asiatic sovereigns.

The Persians enter Isfahan.

The leader of the Persian troops was either too prudent or too politic to pursue his enemies into the City of Isfahan. When he heard of their flight, he sent a detachment to guard the royal palace, and quiet the minds of the inhabitants; and three days after the action he entered the capital *. The first measure he adopted was to make a diligent search for the Affghans that had been left, or had remained from choice: all these were publicly executed, except such as the inhabitants requested might be saved, on account of the moderation and humanity with which they had acted when they enjoyed power. The remains of Sultan Mahmood were abandoned by Nâdir to the fury of the populace: and a noble edifice, which had been raised over the body of the Affghan prince, was in an instant levelled with the ground, and the place where he had been interred was converted into a common sewer, to receive the filth of the city: an act of unmanly vengeance, but worthy of those who had basely submitted to his cruel tyranny.

Shah Tâmâsp arrives at Isfahan.

Shah Tâmâsp, the moment he heard of the success of his troops, left Teheran, to which he had advanced, and arrived in Isfahan soon after it was evacuated by the Affghans. Though received with acclamation and joy, almost every object he viewed was calculated to inspire grief: and we must judge favourably of the heart of this weak prince when informed, that he burst into tears as he walked through the solitary and defaced halls of his glorious ancestors. But

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 276.

his feelings had a still greater trial to support: he knew that Ashrâff, when he slew his father, had carried off all the females of the royal family; and his astonishment may be conceived, when he entered the interior apartments, to find himself clasped to the bosom of an old woman, who called him her dear son. He was soon satisfied she was his mother, who had escaped the fate of the other sultanas and princesses, from being unknown. She had disguised herself as a slave when Mahmood took the capital; and had not only worn the dress, but performed the lowest menial duties of the rank she assumed for a period of seven years*.

Nâdir Kooli is sent in pursuit of the enemy.

Tâmâsp urged his general to pursue the Affghans, as every day brought accounts of the dreadful excesses which they committed: but Nâdir Kooli, who had already been appointed commander of the army, and Governor of the Province of Khorassan, required the power of levying money on the country as essential to enable him to bring the war to a speedy and successful issue. Tâmâsp was sensible that to comply with this demand was little less than to cede the sovereignty of the empire: but the soldiers would act under no other chief, and the principal nobles even recommended the measure. The monarch gave way; and Nâdir marched the moment his desire was granted It was the depth of winter, and his troops suffered extremely from the great severity of the season, and the want of supplies; for Ashrâff had laid the whole country waste: but these were the only obstacles he had to encounter, for the dispirited Affghans, who had assembled near Persepolis to give him battle, fled the moment they were attacked†, and

Obtains a power to raise money.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 278.

† This battle, or rather route, took place the fifteenth of July, 1730.—HANWAY, Vol. II. page 280.

CHAP. XVI.

Attacks and defeats the Affghans.

A.D. 1730. A.H. 1142.

entered Shiraz in the greatest confusion. Their prince, when at that city, desired to negotiate for a safe retreat to his own country. He offered to restore all the ladies of the royal family of Persia, and to return the treasure and effects of the crown, provided his army was permitted to retire, with their families, arms, and baggage. To this overture Nâdir replied, that the Affghans should all be put to the sword, unless they immediately gave up their ruler. While this negotiation was carrying on, and the Affghan chiefs had actually agreed to purchase their safety by a disgraceful compliance, Ashrâff fled with two hundred followers. His escape was the signal for the general dispersion of his army. The precipitation and confusion of the flight of the Affghans, and their ultimate destruction, are described in glowing colours by an historian*, who witnessed the scenes he has so well portrayed. They amounted, when at Shiraz, to more than twenty thousand men. These, divided under different leaders, took distinct routes. They were closely pursued by the Persians, who traced them by the dead horses and camels they left on the road, and by the slaughtered bodies of old men, women, and children; who, when unable to keep up, had been put to death by their own relations and friends, to prevent their falling into the hands of an enraged enemy. Ashrâff had sent his brother to the sea coast, charged with considerable treasure, to bribe the Governor of Bussorah to give him his aid: but the inhabitants of that part of the Province of Lâr through which this party had to march, attacked and slew the chief and all his followers, and obtained an immense booty. Excited by the success of these peasants, a few Persian captives rose upon the Affghan garrison of Lâr, and put them to the sword.

Ashrâff makes his escape, and the whole of his tribe disperse.

* MSS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

The genius and success of Nâdir Kooli appeared, at this moment, to elevate his countrymen; while the Affghans, dejected by their losses, felt all that dread they had so recently inspired. The loss of the City and Province of Lâr, and the rise of all the inhabitants of Kerman, banished every hope of maintaining himself in Persia from the breast of Ashrâff; who, taking a few followers, endeavoured to reach his native plains by the route of Seistan: but the lawless tribes of Baloochistan, who had favoured his advance in the hope of plunder, had now the same motive to cut off his retreat. He was attacked by these tribes in every direction, and, after escaping numberless dangers, was at last discovered, when wandering* in the desert, by the son of Abdûllâ Khan, a Baloochee, who instantly slew him, and sent his head, and a very large diamond which was found on his person, as a present to Shah Tâmâsp †. Thus terminated the life of a prince, who united many noble qualities, if not virtues, to a barbarous disposition; which was probably more the result of the situation in which he was placed, than of his natural character. His own countrymen deemed him wise, moderate, and brave; and the Persians even term him the best of their savage oppressors.

CHAP. XVI.

Ashrâff is slain

The miseries endured by a great proportion of the Affghans, and some of the principal chiefs, exceeded those of Ashrâff, because they were more protracted. Few of them escaped death, and hardly any returned to their native country. They either perished from want and fatigue upon the desert, or were taken

* Ashrâff had only two attendants with him when he was slain.

† MS. of Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen.

CHAP. XVI. and sold as slaves. One large division proceeded to the sea coast, where some embarked in small vessels, and went to Lâhsa, a town on the Arabian shore, nearly opposite the Island of Bahrein, where they were all slain, the moment they landed, by the cruel caution of the governor* of that port. Those who reached the shores of Mekran and Scind shared no better fate: and the respectable author†, who relates their sufferings, informs us, that when he came to India, several years after this event, he saw a nephew of Ashrâff, and an Affghan officer of rank, called Khodâhdâd Khan, who had been Governor of Lâr, earning their bread by bringing water to the inhabitants of the Town of Muscat: while another noble of that nation, called Sunsâr Khan, with whom he had a long conversation, obtained a scanty subsistence at the same seaport by carrying baskets of earth.

Such was the termination of this remarkable invasion. But the death and captivity of the whole of the Affghans was but a slight atonement for the great calamities which they had inflicted upon Persia. Within the short period of seven years, nearly a million of her inhabitants had perished, her finest provinces had been rendered desert, and her proudest edifices levelled with the dust; and this by enemies, who had neither the force nor the wisdom to maintain the conquest which they had made; and, consequently, never could repair the ruin they had effected. The Affghans had no regular government in their own country that could support a

* His name was Shaikh Benee Khâlud.

† Shaikh Mahomed Aly Hâzeen, whose MS. has been of great use in writing this chapter.

foreign conquest; and they were averse, from their habits, to that complete emigration which has given permanent success to so many Tartar tribes. From the first to the last day of their rule in Persia, they were a small army of foreigners, in the midst of a great nation. Removed to a vast distance from their own country, they could expect no support in the event of a reverse of fortune; and their power had, therefore, no foundation, but in the continued fears of the multitudes by whom they were surrounded. The charm was broken by the daring spirit of Nâdir Kooli: and his easy success excited a spirit among his countrymen, which was increased by a deep sense of shame at their former base and spiritless submission.

The total destruction of the Affghans, instead of restoring Tâmâsp to the sovereignty of Persia, proved only the prelude to the extinction of the little power which that ill-fated prince had before enjoyed. The few events connected with his name which are worthy of mention, will find a place in the history of his victorious general; who, after triumphing over the enemies of his country, first usurped the power, and afterwards the title, of the monarch of Persia.

CHAPTER XVII.

The History of Nâdir Shah, and his immediate Successors.

CHAP. XVII. THE rise of Nâdir Shah from the lowest ranks of life to be the absolute monarch of his country, is an event which would attract attention, even if the guilty fame he had acquired as a conqueror and destroyer had not perpetuated his memory. The first enthusiasm of the religion of Mahomed had swept away the Sassanian dynasty: but a bold and able leader* had, by the destruction of the power of the Caliphs of Arabia, rescued his country from the ignominy of being deemed one of the provinces of another empire, and restored it to its dignity as a kingdom. From that period it had been in possession of Tartar chiefs, who had generally emigrated with their tribes into the milder climate of Persia, and whose power was continued, for a time, by the support of those warlike followers by whom it had been established. A revolution of a very uncommon nature had transferred the crown of Persia from these races of Tartar chiefs to the son of an ascetic†. Several of the first of the Suffavean princes were worthy of their exalted destiny: but the last century of the rule of this family presents us with a picture that can excite no feelings but those of disgust and indignation: and such was the

* Yacoob-ben-Leis. Vide Vol. I. page 279.

† Shah Ismail.

Engraved by C. Heath.

NÂDIR SHAH.

From an Original Persian Painting.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

debased and worthless character of some of these monarchs, that the mind is almost reconciled to those dreadful scenes amid which they perished.

In countries where the government is despotic, the opinion of the people is seldom heard; but it appears often in action. It is always in extremes, and generally formed by contrast. We can well conceive, that at a moment when weakness, cruelty, and debauchery, seemed the chief qualities of the sovereign, and when the nobles of the empire were only remarkable for their effeminate vices and their cowardice, that a fallen and suffering nation like Persia should have turned its eyes, with admiration and hope, on such a character as Nâdir Shah. The lowness of his birth, the coarseness of his manners, and the guilty but daring actions of his early life, were all calculated to favour these impressions, as they placed him in complete opposition to those rulers and nobles to whom they attributed all their misfortunes.

Several of the events of the life of Nâdir Shah have been already related; but it will be necessary to preface the account of his reign*

* The life of Nâdir Shah, like that of Timour, has been given by a flatterer. Meerza Mehdy, his confidential secretary, who attended him in all his expeditions, has written an account of his actions; and his work has been translated by Sir William Jones. The general credit to which this volume is entitled, is not destroyed by its being written in a strain of eulogy. The author survived his sovereign; and the free manner in which he has detailed those actions which disgraced his latter years, may be received as a proof of the authenticity of other parts of his history. But we have, in the works of Jonas Hanway, a very elaborate life of this tyrant; and the personal knowledge this author had of many of the facts which he records, gives it particular value. We have also a Memoir of Nâdir written by Mr. Fraser, from Persian manuscripts he obtained in India. In addition to all these authentic materials, I

CHAP. XVII.

with a cursory view of those occurrences which preceded his elevation to the throne of Persia.

An account of the family of Nâdir Shah.

The father of Nâdir Shah belonged to the tribe of Affshâr, which was one of those seven Turkish tribes who attached themselves to the family of the Suffavean kings. His name was Imaum Kooli; and we must from every account conclude that he was a person of no note or rank. Nâdir Kooli * himself never boasted of a proud genealogy: and even his flattering historian †, though he informs us that the father of his hero was a man of some consequence in his tribe, reveals the truth by a metaphorical apology for low birth, in which he states, that the diamond has its value from its own lustre, not from that of the rock where it grew. We learn from other sources ‡, that he earned his livelihood by making coats and caps of sheep-skins ||. Nâdir often spoke of his low birth: and when the pride of the Royal House of Delhi required that his son §, who was to marry a princess of that family, should give an account

obtained in Persia, a copy of the correspondence of this monarch, and several other valuable manuscripts which contained accounts of events connected with his life.

* Kooli means "slave;" Nâdir, "wonderful;" and the latter term is used as an epithet to describe the Almighty. His name, therefore, signified "the slave of the "wonderful, or of God." When he was promoted by the favour of Shah Tâmâsp to the dignity of a khan, he took the name of that monarch, and was called Tâmâsp Kooli Khan; but, on reaching the throne, he styled himself Nâdir Shah, resuming his original name of Nâdir, which is the one I shall use throughout his history. Meerza Mehdy, in his Life of Nâdir Shah, never mentions that monarch under the name of Tâmâsp Kooli Khan, which leads Sir William Jones to doubt the fact of Nâdir ever having assumed that appellation.

† Meerza Mehdy.

‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 257.

|| Persian MSS.

§ This prince's name was Nasser Ullah.

of his male ancestors for seven generations, the conqueror exclaimed: "Tell them that he is the son of Nâdir Shah, the son "of the sword, the grandson of the sword; and so on, till they "have a descent of seventy instead of seven generations*!"

Birth of Nâdir Shah. A. D. 1688. A. H. 1100.

Nâdir Shah was born† in the province of Khorassan. Persian historians pass over the early occurrences of his life; and the first event that these notice, is the birth of his eldest son, Rezâ Kooli, which occurred when he was thirty-one years of age‡. He had before that experienced great vicissitudes of fortune, and had given proofs both of valour and talent. When only seventeen, he was taken prisoner by the Usbegs, who made annual incursions into Khorassan: but he effected his escape after a captivity of four years‖. His occupation from that period, till he entered into the service of Shah Tâmâsp, can only merit notice as it is calculated to show that the character of this extraordinary man was always the same. He was at one time in the service of a petty chief§ of his native province, whom he murdered, and whose daughter¶ he carried off and married. After this, he obtained a precarious subsistence by heading a band of robbers**; from which occupation he passed, by an easy transition in such troubled times, into the employment of the

He is made prisoner by the Usbegs.

Makes his escape.

Turns robber.

* Persian MSS.

† Sir William Jones, following Meerza Mehdy, fixes his birth on Sunday, the eleventh of November, 1688. Hanway, who cannot be expected to be so correct as the Persian historian in his dates, places his birth in 1687.

‡ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 28.

‖ His mother was taken at the same time, and died in Tartary.—Hanway, Vol. II. page 257.

§ The name of this chief was Babool-beg.

¶ This lady was the mother of the Prince Rezâ Kooli.

** Hanway, Vol. II. page 259.

CHAP. XVII.

Enters the service of the Governor of Khorassan.
A. D. 1714.
A. H. 1126.
A. D. 1719.
A. H. 1132.
Is degraded and punished.

Governor of Khorassan, by whom he was at first raised to rank and command, as a reward for his valour in actions with the Usbegs; and afterwards degraded, and punished with the bastinado, on account of his insolent and turbulent conduct.

Irritated at the disgrace he had suffered, Nâdir left Mushed, and went to the Fort of Kelât in the same province, which was in the possession of his uncle, who appears, at this period, to have been at the head of a small branch of the Affshârs. He resided there but a short time, before his relation, alarmed at his violence and ambition, compelled him to retire. He appears next to have resumed his occupation of a robber; but his depredations were now on a more extended scale. The Affghans had become masters of Isfahan; and the rule of the Suffavean monarchs over the distant provinces of the kingdom was subverted, without that of their conquerors being established. At such a moment, a plunderer of known valour and experience could not want followers; and in the course of a short time we find Nâdir a chief of reputation, at the head of a body of three thousand men, levying large contributions on the inhabitants of Khorassan*. His uncle, alarmed at his increasing power, sought his friendship. He addressed a kind letter to him, and proposed that he should enter the service of Shah Tâmâsp, and aid that prince in expelling the Affghans from Persia. Nâdir pretended to listen to this overture, and earnestly desired that the king should grant him a pardon for his past offences. This was easily obtained; and he went to Kelât to receive it. He appears to have always deemed the governor of that place as the chief obstacle to his rise; and at this moment he laid a plan to destroy him, and to seize his fortress.

Resumes his occupation of a robber.
A. D. 1722.
A. H. 1135.

Becomes a chief of great reputation.
A. D. 1726.
A. H. 1139.

Obtains pardon, and enters the service of Shah Tâmâsp.
A. D. 1727.
A. H. 1140.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 261.

He completely succeeded in both; and, after having slain his uncle* with his own hand, he proceeded to employ the means he had acquired by this crime against the Affghan ruler of Khorassan. This popular attack upon the enemies of his country enabled him to obtain a second pardon from Shah Tâmâsp, whose service he entered, and to whose cause he brought a great accession of strength and reputation.

Takes Kelât, and puts his uncle to death.

Obtains a second pardon from Shah Tâmâsp.

Shah Tâmâsp early entertained the greatest jealousy of Nâdir; and upon his disobeying a mandate he had sent him, to return from an expedition on which he was engaged, the weak monarch ventured to proclaim him a rebel and a traitor. The indignant chief, the moment he heard of these proceedings, marched against the court, which he soon compelled to submit on the terms he chose to dictate†. From the occurrence of this open rupture, which took place soon after the conquest of Mushed, we may date the annihilation of the little power Tâmâsp had ever enjoyed. Nâdir continued to treat him with respect, till he deemed the time mature for his usurpation of the throne: but we discover that, as early as his first expedition into Khorassan, he began to prepare the minds of his countrymen for his future elevation. Like Ardisheer, the founder of the Sassanian race of kings, he had his visions of future grandeur. He saw, we are told, in one of these, a water-fowl and a white fish with four horns: he dreamt that he shot the bird; and,

Marches against the court, and obtains his own terms.

Nâdir's dream

* Some oriental writers, who find nothing but virtue in the early life of Nâdir, inform us, that his uncle was an usurper of his right, and that his nephew, by slaying him, at once did an act of justice, and possessed himself of the means to save his country. — Fraser's *History of Nâdir Shah.*

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 64.

CHAP. XVII.

after all his attendants had failed in their attempts to seize the extraordinary fish, he stretched out his hand and caught it with the greatest ease*. The simple fact of his dreaming of a bird and a fish, he was informed by flattering astrologers, was a certain presage of his attaining imperial power; and his historian† has had a less difficult task in discovering, from subsequent events, that the four horns of the fish were types of the kingdoms of Persia, Khaurizm, India, and Tartary, which were all destined to be conquered by his hero. Such trifles are not unworthy of notice; they show the art or superstition of him who uses or believes in them, and portray, better than the most elaborate descriptions, the character of those minds upon which they make an impression.

Which is deemed a certain presage of his attaining empire.

The expulsion of the Affghans from Persia seemed the sole effort of the genius of Nâdir; and no reward, therefore, appeared too great for the man who had liberated his country from its cruel oppressors. The grant made by Tâmâsp to this chief, of the four finest provinces‡ of the empire, was considered only as a just recompense for the great services that he had performed. We are told, that in the same letter by which Tâmâsp conveyed the grant of these countries, or, in other words, alienated half his kingdom, his victorious general was requested to assume the title of sultan, and a diadem richly set with jewels, was sent by one of the noblemen of the court. Nâdir accepted all the honours|| except the title of sultan§; that high name,

A. D. 1730. A. H. 1143. Nâdir receives a grant of four provinces.

Is requested to assume the title of sultan.

Which he refuses.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 65.

† Meerza Mehdy.

‡ Khorassan, Mazenderan, Seistan, and Kerman.

|| A marriage was, at this period, agreed upon between Rezâ Kooli, the eldest son of Nâdir, and a daughter of the late sultan, Shah Hussein.

§ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 111.

he thought, would excite envy without conferring benefit: he, however, took advantage of this proffered elevation to the rank of a prince, to exercise one of the most important privileges which attaches to monarchs. He directed that his army should be paid in coin brought from the province of Khorassan, and that it should be struck in his own name, which virtually amounted to an assumption of the independent sovereignty of that country.

Coin struck in his own name.

The conquests made by the Turks have been mentioned. The armies of that nation continued to occupy some of the finest parts of the province of Irak, and all Aderbijan. Nâdir marched against them as soon as his troops were refreshed from the fatigues they had endured in the pursuit of the Affghans. He encountered the united force of two Turkish pâchâs on the plains of Hamadan, overthrew them, and made himself master, not only of that city, but of all the country in its vicinity *. He hastened to Aderbijan, where the same success attended him. Tabreez, Ardebil, and all the principal cities of that quarter, had surrendered; and the conqueror was preparing to besiege Erivân, the capital of Armenia, when he received from his brother, whom he had left in the government of Khorassan, an account of an alarming rebellion of the Affghans of that province. He hastened to its relief; and his success against the rebels was completed by the reduction of the fortresses of Furrâh and Herat. An event occurred, during the siege of the latter city, which marked the barbarous character of this war. Nâdir had obtained a victory over a large division of the Affghan force, and resolved to celebrate it with a splendid feast. Among other guests were several prisoners

Marches against the Turks.

Whom he overthrows, and takes the City of Hamadan and the Province of Aderbijan.

Returns and quells a rebellion in Khorassan.

A. D. 1731.
A. H. 1144.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 112.

CHAP. XVII. of high rank. During the festivities, the heads of three hundred Affghans, who had been slain in the action, were held up on the tops of spears. "At this sight," says the flattering historian of Nâdir, "the chiefs of our enemies fixed their eyes upon the "ground, and never dared to raise them again, notwithstanding "the extraordinary kindness with which they were treated by their "great and generous conqueror* !!!"

Tâmâsp marches against the Turks. A. D. 1732. A. H. 1145.

While Nâdir was employed at the siege of Herat, the Persian nobles at Isfahan persuaded the weak Tâmâsp to place himself at the head of an army and march against the Turks, who were again assembling on the frontier. The reverses which the arms of that nation had sustained in Persia had caused a revolution at Constantinople, where the janizaries had first murdered the vizier, and afterwards dethroned Ahmed †, and placed his nephew, Mahmood ‡, upon the throne. To this prince Nâdir had sent an envoy ‖, demanding that the Turks should evacuate the province of Aderbijan: and Shah Tâmâsp had sent another with what a Persian historian indignantly terms "a sweet-scented letter of congratulation," upon his elevation to the throne. Before the result of the mission sent by Nâdir could be

Retreats from Erivân, and is defeated.

known, Tâmâsp had marched to besiege Erivân; had retreated from before that fortress; been defeated by a Turkish army; and had lost, in one month, all that the genius and valour of his general had gained during the preceding season. To render the effects of his weakness

Concludes a peace with the Turks, by

complete, the alarmed monarch had agreed to a peace, by which he abandoned the whole of the country beyond the Araxes to the

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 144.

† Ahmed the Third. ‡ Mahmood the Fifth. ‖ Rezâ Kooli Khan.

Turks, and ceded five districts of the province of Kermanshah to Ahmed, the reigning Pâchâ of Bagdad, by whom this treaty was negotiated. The disgrace of this engagement was aggravated, by its containing no stipulation for the release of the Persians who had been made prisoners during the war.

which he cedes several provinces.

The moment that Nâdir received accounts of the peace, it seems to have occurred to his mind, that it afforded an excellent pretext for the consummation of those projects he had so long cherished: but, though bold and impatient, he was compelled to proceed with caution to the extinction of a race of kings to whom obedience had become a habit, and who were, at that moment, represented by a prince, who, though weak and despicable, was endeared to many of his subjects by his misfortunes. His first step was to issue a proclamation, in which he inveighed with bitterness against a treaty which bounded the great empire of Persia by the river Araxes, and left many of the inhabitants of that kingdom prisoners in the hands of cruel enemies. "Such a treaty," he said, "is contrary to the will of Heaven: and the angels, who guard the tomb of the holy Aly, call aloud for the deliverance of his followers from the bondage in which they are now held by vile heretics*."

Nâdir takes advantage of the weakness of the court.

Issues a proclamation, in which he inveighs against the peace concluded by Tâmâsp.

There is no country, however abject its inhabitants may appear, where the most daring and ambitious can venture to usurp the supreme power without first obtaining a hold on public opinion: and we cannot have a stronger proof of this fact, as applicable to Persia, than what we find in the conduct of Nâdir upon this memorable occasion. Though that chief had revived the military spirit of

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 154.

CHAP. XVII. his country, and roused a nation, sunk in sloth and luxury, to great and successful exertion; yet neither this success, the imbecility of Shah Tâmâsp, nor a reliance upon his own fame and strength, could induce him to take the last step of usurpation, until he had, by his arts, excited in the minds of his countrymen that complete contempt for the reigning sovereign, and that pride in his glory, which was likely to make his elevation appear more the accomplishment of their wishes than of his ambition.

Nâdir's letter to the Governor of Fars.

At the same time that Nâdir published the proclamation which has been mentioned, he addressed letters to all the military chiefs of the country. In that to the Governor of Fars, which has been preserved*, he informs him of the great success he has had against the Affghans, and of the conquest of Herat. He then proceeds to state the astonishment and indignation with which he has learnt the particulars of the treaty concluded with Turkey. "You will no doubt," he observes, "be rejoiced to hear, that, as it was to be hoped from the "goodness of God, this peace with the Turks is not likely to endure; "and you may rest in expectation of my approach: for, by the "blessing of the Most High, I will advance immediately, with an "army elated with success, skilled in sieges, numerous as emmets, "valiant as lions, and combining with the vigour of youth the "prudence of age. Let the cup-bearer" (he exclaims, quoting from a popular poet †) "tell our enemy, the worshipper of fire, "to cover his head with dust; for the water that had departed, "is returned into its channel." He concludes this letter by threatening, with excommunication and destruction, all Sheahs, or, in

* MS. Collection of Nâdir Shah's Letters.

† Hafiz.

other words, all Persians who are adverse to the renewal of hostilities. " Those Sheahs," he observes, " who are backward on this " great occasion, and are reconciled to this shameful peace, shall be " expelled from the faithful sect, and for ever counted among its " enemies. To slaughter them will be meritorious; to permit their " existence, impious." CHAP. XVII.

The actions of Nâdir corresponded with these declarations. He sent an officer to Constantinople, the duties of whose mission to the Emperor Mahmood were limited to this short message: " Restore " the provinces* of Persia, or prepare for war." A messenger was deputed to Ahmed, the Pâchâ of Bagdad, to apprise him, " that the deliverer of Persia" was approaching. A peace had been concluded with the Russians, by which it was stipulated that they should abandon all the conquests they had made on the shores of the Caspian: and Nâdir despatched two officers to that quarter to see that there was no delay in the execution of this treaty.

Nâdir sends deputations to Constantinople and Bagdad.

Concludes a peace with Russia.

After adopting these measures, Nâdir marched to Isfahan. He first upbraided Shah Tâmâsp with his conduct in making peace with the Turks, and then pretended to be reconciled to him: but the scene of his mock submission to this prince drew to a close. Tâmâsp was invited to the tents of his general to share in the joys of a feast, which terminated in his being seized, and dethroned†. He was sent to Khorassan. The Mahomedan author‡ who records these events,

Marches to Isfahan. 16th August, A. D. 1732. A. H. 1145.

Shah Tâmâsp is dethroned and sent to Khorassan.

* Georgia was the principal province that was alienated by the treaty, and that part of Aderbijan which lies to the northward of the Araxes.

† The twenty-sixth of August.

‡ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 162.

CHAP. XVII. is careful in informing us, that the generosity of Nâdir desired that Tâmâsp, though a prisoner, should be accompanied by all his ladies, and enjoy every other comfort that could be deemed necessary to pleasurable existence.

The time did not yet appear to Nâdir to be ripe for his seizing the crown of Persia. The officers of his army, and some venal nobles of the court, earnestly requested, that he, who was alone worthy to wear the diadem, would place it upon his head: but he rejected their entreaties, from pretended respect for the blood of the Suffavean kings. The son of Tâmâsp, an infant* only eight months old, was seated upon the throne, and Nâdir accepted the name and power of regent of the empire†.

The son of Shah Tâmâsp is elevated to the throne.

Nâdir marches to the attack of Bagdad.

When the ceremonies necessary at this coronation were over, Nâdir marched with a large army to the attack of Bagdad. The governor of that city, Ahmed Pâchâ, was not more distinguished for his talents as a soldier than a statesman; and the Persian leader had made his preparations in the expectation of an obstinate defence: but neither the valour nor skill of Ahmed would have saved his city, had not the Turkish general, Topâl Osman, advanced, at the head of an immense army‡, to his relief. Nâdir instantly resolved to hazard a battle. He left a small part|| of his army in his lines, and led the remainder to attack Topâl Osman, who was

Leaves a part of his army before Bag-

* This child is called Abbas the Third. He is included, by some historians, in the list of Persian kings.

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 162.

‡ Meerza Mehdy asserts, that this army amounted to one hundred thousand men.

|| According to Meerza Mehdy, he left a body of twelve thousand men in the trenches before Bagdad.—Sir WILLIAM JONES's *Works*, Vol. V. page 174.

CHAP. XVII.

encamped on the banks of the Tigris, near the village of Sâmârâh, which is situated about sixty miles from Bagdad. The action that ensued was one of the most bloody ever fought between the Turks and Persians. It was at first favourable to the latter, whose cavalry put the enemy to flight: but the Turkish infantry advanced, and restored the battle. A corps of Arabs, from whom Nâdir expected support, fell upon one of his flanks. His men, who had been exposed all day to the intense rays of a summer sun, fainted with heat and thirst. He himself twice fell to the ground, in the midst of his enemies, from his horses being shot; and his standard-bearer, conceiving him slain, fled from the field. All these causes combined to give the victory to Topâl Osman; and, after a contest of more than eight hours, the army of Nâdir was completely defeated. The moment the news of this event reached Bagdad, the inhabitants of that city fell on the troops left to guard the trenches, who were also routed. The loss of the Persians in this battle was estimated by their enemies at sixty thousand men; and it probably amounted to more than one third of that number. The Turks suffered almost as severely: but their triumph was very complete; for Nâdir did not reassemble the whole of his broken and dispersed army till he reached the plains of Hamadan, a distance of more than two hundred miles from the field of action.

dad, and encounters Topâl Osman. 17th July, A. D. 1733. A. H. 1146. An action.

In which the Turks are victorious.

There is no period in the life of Nâdir at which he appears to more advantage than after this great misfortune. Instead of reproaching his soldiers with their defeat, he loaded them with praises and with favours. Their losses in money and horses were more than repaid, and they were encouraged by the exhortations as well as the actions of their politic commander, to desire nothing

Nâdir's conduct to his troops after the battle.

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1733.
A. H. 1146.

He advances again to Bagdad with a large force.

so much as an opportunity of revenging themselves upon their enemies. This conduct increased his reputation and popularity to so great a degree, that recruits from every part of Persia hastened to join his standard; and in less than three months after this action, Nâdir descended again into the plains of Bagdad, with an army more numerous than before.

His brave antagonist, Topâl Osman, had jealous rivals at the Court of Constantinople; and these, alarmed at the great fame he had acquired, not only prevented, by their intrigues, his being reinforced with men, but, by withholding the supplies of money that were necessary to pay his troops, compelled him to separate his force. He, nevertheless, made the greatest efforts to oppose this second invasion of Nâdir. He sent a corps of cavalry to arrest the progress of the Persians: but the latter, eager for revenge, made such a sudden and furious attack on this body, that they completely routed it. On hearing this intelligence, the Turkish general advanced with all the troops he had been able to draw together to its support; but his own army partook of the panic of their flying comrades. Topâl Osman endeavoured in vain to rally them. He was himself so infirm, that he always rode in a litter. His attendants, in the hope that he might escape, lifted him (when the flight became general,) upon a horse: but his rich dress attracted the eyes of a Persian soldier, who pierced him with his lance, and then separating his head from his body, carried it to his commander. We are pleased to find that Nâdir respected the remains of his former conqueror*. His head and corpse were

Routes a body of Turks.

The army of Topâl Osman join in the flight.

Topâl Osman is slain.

* We find a very interesting account of this celebrated Turkish general in Hanway. Topâl Osman had been taken in his early life by a Spanish privateer: he was

sent by an officer of rank to the Turkish army, that they might receive those honourable rites of sepulture, which in all nations are considered due to a great and valiant soldier.

Nâdir concludes a treaty with the Pâchâ of Bagdad.

After the death of Topâl Osman, and the defeat of his army, Nâdir proceeded to invest Bagdad*: but being alarmed at the account of a serious revolt in the Province of Fars†, he readily listened to the terms which the ruler of that city proposed, which were, that the governments of Turkey and Persia should repossess the countries that belonged to them in the reign of Sultan Hussein, before the Affghan invasion. The rebellion which had compelled him to retire from the Turkish territories had hardly been suppressed, before he learnt that the Emperor of Constantinople had refused to ratify the engagements made by the Pâchâ of Bagdad,

Which the Emperor of Constantinople refuses to ratify.

ransomed and restored to his country by the generosity of a French officer, of the name of Vincent Arnaud, at Malta. The gratitude and kindness which he showed his deliverer gives us the best impression of his private virtues. He was raised to the high but dangerous dignity of prime vizier in 1731, and his first act was to desire the French ambassador to write for his benefactor. "Bid him make haste," said Topâl Osman, "for we viziers seldom last long." He had, before he was promoted to this high station, repaid Arnaud tenfold for his ransom; but he now loaded him with caresses and favours, and made a glory of presenting to the whole court the virtuous and generous man, to whom he owed his life and liberty. When Topâl Osman was removed from the office of vizier, he publicly returned thanks to Heaven at his having been released with honour from such a burden. He was afterwards raised to the command of the Turkish armies on the Persian frontier, and terminated his life as has been described.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 190.

† This rebellion was headed by Mahomed Khan, who was the chief of a tribe of Baloochees: after he was taken prisoner he hanged himself.

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir hastens to occupy Armenia and Georgia.

A. D. 1734. A. H. 1147.

and had sent a general, named Abdûllâ *, at the head of a large force, with orders, either to conclude peace, or to continue the war, as circumstances should render it expedient. Nâdir hastened to occupy Armenia and Georgia, which were the principal of the disputed provinces. He threw a bridge over the rapid Araxes; and at once invested the cities of Teflis, Gunjah, and Erivân, in the hope that the danger with which they were threatened, would lead the Turkish general to hazard an action. Nor was he deceived. *Abdûllâ, encouraged by his superior numbers,* left the entrenchments † with which he had covered his army, and attacked the Persians on the plains of Bâghâvund, near Erivân. The Persian leader, when he saw him advancing, addressed his troops in the most animated language. " Their enemies," he said, " outnumbered them eight to one ‡; but that was only an incitement to " glorious exertion. He had dreamt on the past night," he told them, " that a furious animal had rushed into his tent, which, after " a long struggle, he had slain ‖. With such an omen," he exclaimed, " success is certain to those who fight under the protection of " his great arm, who raiseth the weak to glory, and casteth down " the proudest oppressors." If his troops were encouraged by this

A. D. 1735. A. H. 1148.

Harangues his troops.

* Hanway styles this officer Abdûllâ Kouprouli, Pâchâ of Cairo. — HANWAY, Vol. II. page 336.

† He had fortified a camp near the city of Kars (the Charsa of Ptolemy,) which is at present subject to Turkey, and has a population of about thirty thousand souls. — KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia*, page 323.

‡ Meerza Mehdy gives an exaggerated account of the number of the Turks. They had, he asserts, sixty thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry.

‖ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 216.

speech, they were still more so by his example. After his skill had made the most able disposition of his army, he rushed upon the enemy at the head of his bravest men; and wherever he led, the Persians were irresistible. In one of these charges, Abdûllâ Pâchâ was slain by a soldier*, who brought his head to Nâdir; and, as the battle still raged, he directed it to be fixed upon a spear, and to be displayed where it would be best seen by the enemy. The effect was as he anticipated. The Turks, perceiving their general was slain, fled in every direction, and left the plain covered with their dead. This victory was followed by the submission of the cities of Gunjah and Teflis; and those of Kars and Erivân, with all the former possessions of the Persians in that quarter†, were soon afterwards ceded to him by the policy of the Ottoman Court; who, taught by misfortune, were glad to conclude a peace on the basis which had been before settled by the Pâchâ of Bagdad.

CHAP. XVII.

Attacks the Turks.

Whose general is slain.

The Turks disperse.

Several cities submit to Nâdir.

Concludes a peace with the Ottoman Court.

The period was now arrived when Nâdir thought he might lay aside the veil which he had hitherto used. An account was brought that the infant‡ sovereign of Persia had died at Isfahan, and consequently that the throne was vacant. It has always been the

Death of the infant sovereign of Persia

* The name of this man was Roostum. — Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's *Works*, Vol. V. page 217.

† During the three months between the victory of Bâghâvund and the conclusion of peace, Nâdir was employed in the reduction of the Lesghees, a savage tribe who dwell on the mountains that separate Georgia from the Caspian, and continually vex that province with their irruptions.

‡ Many authors state that the child died a natural death: but this is of little consequence. It cannot be supposed that Nâdir could ever have hesitated one moment in removing so frail an obstacle, (if that had been necessary,) to clear the path of his ambition.

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir summons an assembly of all persons of rank and consideration.

A. D. 1736.
A. H. 1149.

usage of the kings of Persia to observe the Nouroze, or vernal equinox, as a great festival, and on it all the chief officers, civil and military, of the government appear at court. Nâdir issued an order, that not only these, but every person of rank and consideration in the kingdom, should meet him, on the day of that festival, on the plains of Chowal Mogâm *, where he ordered a number of temporary buildings to be erected, and made every preparation to receive them with splendour and magnificence. We are informed, that upwards of one hundred thousand persons attended this celebrated meeting: and if this includes the troops, the amount is probably not exaggerated.

A. D. 1736.
A. H. 1149.

Nâdir (his historian informs us,) assembled the principal nobles and officers on the morning of the festival, and addressed them in the following terms †. "Shah Tâmâsp and Shah Abbas were "your kings, and the princes of their blood are the heirs to "the throne. Choose one of them for your sovereign, or some "other person whom you know to be great and virtuous. It is "enough for me that I have restored the throne to its glory, and "delivered my country from the Affghans, the Turks, and the "Russians." He retired, that their deliberations might seem more

His speech to the assembly.

* "The celebrated Chowal Mogâm, or Plain of Mogâm, extends from the neighbourhood of Ardebil to the mouths of the Cyrus. It is reported to be sixty fursungs "in length, and twenty in breadth; and its rich soil, and luxuriant pastures, seem to "have rendered it the favourite encamping ground of most eastern conquerors. The "victorious career of Pompey the Great was arrested by the venomous serpents with "which it is thought to be infested. Heraclius passed some time at Mogam."—KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia*, page 152.

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 235.

CHAP. XVII.

free, but was soon recalled to hear their unanimous request, that he, who had saved his country, and was alone able to protect it, would accept the crown. He refused this offer, protesting solemnly that the idea of ascending the throne of Persia had never once entered his imagination*! The same scene was acted every day for a month, till Nâdir, appearing to be subdued by their earnest solicitations, agreed to comply with their wishes; but said, when he made this apparent concession, "I must insist that, as *I* "sacrifice so much for Persia, the inhabitants of that nation "shall, in consideration for one who has no object but their "tranquillity, abandon that belief which was introduced by Shah "Ismail, the founder of the Suffavean dynasty, and once more ac-"knowledge the legitimate authority of the four first caliphs †. "Since the schism of Sheah has prevailed," he added, "this country "has been in continual distraction: let us all become Soonees, and "that will cease. But as every national religion should have a head, "let the holy Imaum Jaaffer, who is of the family of the prophet, and "whom we all venerate, be the head of ours." After the assembly ‡ had consented to this change, and a royal mandate || had been issued

Who request him to accept the crown, which he at first refuses.

Nâdir accepts the crown of Persia, on condition of the Sheah sect being abolished. A. D. 1736. A. H. 1149.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 236.

† Aboubeker, Osman, Omar, and Aly.

‡ I follow the historian of Nâdir Meerza Mehdy. Hanway and others inform us, that the chief priest rose, and advised Nâdir to confine himself to temporal affairs, and not to interfere with matters of religion. The *sudden death* of this rash counsellor warned others into a speedy assent to all Nâdir's propositions.—HANWAY, Vol. II. page 341. FRASER's *History of Nâdir Shah*, page 118.

|| The following translation of the edict he issued on this occasion, is given by an English writer:—

"To all in high stations, the chief pontiff, the governors, ministers of the law, and

CHAP. XVII. to proclaim it, Nâdir informed them, that he would communicate what had been done to the Emperor of Constantinople, and require

" learned men of the royal residence of Isfahan, being exalted through the king's " favour, know ye, that while the abode of our ensigns (on whom victory attends) was " at Chowal Mogâm, it was agreed at several meetings, that from henceforth, according to ancient custom, (being fixed and established in the religion of Haneefa and " Jaaffer, as transmitted to us by our predecessors,) we do acknowledge the directing " caliphs (in all whom the high God is pleased) as the successors of the chief of messengers; and whenever they present themselves, mention the names of each of the " four with great respect. Moreover, in some places of these kingdoms, at the time of " calling to prayers, and standing up at prayer, then mention these words, 'Aly, the " friend of God,' according to the usual method of the Sheahs, and contrary to those " who are orthodox. This is repugnant to religion, and contrary to the agreement and " covenant entered into. Besides, it is evident to the world, that as the prince of the " faithful, the lion of God, the victorious, is elect, praised, and acceptable to the Lord " of glory, his rank and interest at the court of unity will not be increased by vulgar " testimony, nor the full moon of his power be diminished by omitting these words. " The ill consequence of this form is, that both sects, who equally acknowledge the " chief and prophet of both worlds, will, by this difference, be provoked to animosities, " which are disagreeable both to the prophet and to the prince of the faithful. Wherefore, as soon as the purport of this high edict is known, let it be signified to all Musselmen, high and low, great and small, the callers to prayer in the city, its dependencies, and the adjacent countries, that from this day henceforth, these words, as " differing from the orthodox custom, be not mentioned. It is also usual with the " governors in their assemblies, after Fattaha and Tokbir, to say, 'May the king, from " whom all our fortune flows, live for ever.' As a Tokbir for perpetuating a mortal " man is vain, and of no effect, I expressly order, that every khan who is a master of a " tabal and ensign, say it in this manner: 'Thanks to the true king for all benefits.' " From henceforward all persons must observe these settled regulations, and written " orders: for whosoever deviates therefrom, will incur the displeasure of the king of " kings. Written in the month of Suffer, 1149."—FRASER's *History of Nâdir Shah*, page 123.

that monarch to give full effect to this advance to general concord among Mahomedans: and he would also insist, that, as there were now four orthodox sects* among Soonees, the Persians, under the name of the sect of Jaaffer, should be admitted as the fifth, and that another column should be added to the four † which already decorated the temple at Mecca, in honour of this new branch of the true religion.

Motives which induced Nâdir to make this change.

Various conjectures have been made respecting those motives which induced Nâdir to propose to the inhabitants of Persia to abandon the tenets of their belief as Sheahs. He had professed himself a warm admirer of the doctrines of this sect, and had used every effort in his power to kindle that very belief which he now desired to suppress. But the conqueror was always consistent in his object: he worshipped with a sincere heart at no shrine but that of ambition. While he pretended to be the slave of a king of the Suffavean race, and desired only to expel the Affghans and Turks from Persia, he tried to obtain strength by exciting all the rancorous feeling of an opposite sect in the minds of his countrymen. But when success extended his views; when he resolved on the extinction of the descendants of Shah Ismail; and began, in his waking visions, to contemplate, as parts of his future empire, the mountains of Candahar, the plains of India, and the fine provinces of Asia Minor, he naturally sought the abolition of a sect, which, in its very institution, revived the memory of a family he had destroyed, and which appeared, from the hatred with which its

* The sects of Haneefa, Shaffei, Malik, and Hanbul; each of which have an oratory at the temple of Mecca.

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 238.

CHAP. XVII. followers were regarded by the nations he proposed to subdue, likely to interpose a considerable obstacle to the progress of his imperial power.

The coronation of Nâdir. A. D. 1736. A. H. 1149.

The historian of Nâdir is careful in informing us, that the crown of Persia was placed upon the head of the conqueror exactly at twenty minutes past eight on the morning of the twenty-sixth of February*. The moment, no doubt, had been fixed by the most skilful astrologers. The ceremony was performed in a splendid hall erected for the occasion; and Nâdir was seated on a throne covered with precious jewels. Various coins were immediately struck in his name, on which was the following inscription †: "The impression stamped on this gold proclaims to the world "the sovereignty of Nâdir, native of the land of Persia, and the "monarch who subdues the earth." On the reverse was a short Arabic sentence, which signified, "That which has happened is "the best." But even the flatterer ‡ who records these particulars confesses, that there were malicious wits who made free with the latter sentence, and, by the alteration of the position of one letter, made it signify, "That which has happened is not the best."

Coin struck in his name.

He marches to Isfahan.

Nâdir Shah, soon after his elevation to the throne, marched to Isfahan; but the short time he spent in that capital was solely

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 239.

† Some of these coins are in the Bodleian Library. The Persian stanza is,

Siccâ bur zer kurd, nâm e Sultanett dir Jehân,
Nâder e Irân zumeen ou Khoosroo Geettee Sitân.

The Arabic sentence on the reverse was *Al Kheir fimâ wâkâ:* when changed by the wits, it was *Lâ Kheir fimâ wâkâ.* The letters of the Arabic sentence on Nâdir's seal form, as numerals, 1149, the date of the Hejirah on which he ascended the throne.

‡ Meerza Mehdy.

devoted to military preparations: he had resolved on the entire extinction of the Affghans as a separate power, and that could not be effected without the reduction of the City and Province of Candahar, which was then in possession of a prince called Hussein Khan, the brother of the celebrated Mahmood: but before he proceeded upon this expedition, he adopted every measure that could secure the internal tranquillity of Persia* during his absence. The peace of the country round Isfahan had been much disturbed by the depredations of a numerous and barbarous tribe, called Bukhteeârees, who inhabit the mountains that stretch from near this capital to the vicinity of Shuster. The subjugation of these plunderers had ever been deemed impossible. Their lofty and rugged mountains abound with rocks and caverns, which in times of danger serve them as fastnesses and dens. But Nâdir showed that this fancied security, which had protected them for ages, was a mere delusion. He led his veteran soldiers to the tops of their highest mountains; parties of light troops hunted them from the cliffs and glens in which they were concealed; and in the space of one month the tribe was completely subdued. Their chief† was taken prisoner, and put to death: but the policy of Nâdir treated those of his followers who escaped the first fury of his troops with lenity and favour: he assigned them better, but more accessible, lands than what they before possessed: he also took a number of them into his army; and this corps, by its extraordinary bravery at the siege of Candahar, confirmed the wisdom of his generous conduct.

Adopts measures to reduce the Bukhteeâree tribe.

Whom he subdues, and puts their leader to death.

* The Island of Bahrein was taken this year from the Arabs, by Mahomed Tuckee Khan, the Governor of Fars.

† The name of this chief was Aly Moorâd.

CHAP. XVII.

Marches to Candahar. A. D. 1737. A. H. 1150.

Which he blockades.

And traces out lines in its vicinity for a new city, which is called Nâdirâbâd.

Nâdir marched with an army of eighty thousand men through Khorassan and Seistan to Candahar. He met with no resistance of any consequence before he reached that city; but he found its defences were too formidable to give him hopes of its early surrender. His first resolution was to subdue it by blockade; and he not only made permanent cantonments for his army in its vicinity, but ordered the lines of a new city to be traced out, which he called Nâdirâbâd, or "the abode of Nâdir*." He also built towers all round Candahar, and so connected them with small batteries, that it became impossible for the besieged to maintain any intercourse with the surrounding country†. Observing, however, that the Affghans were not intimidated by the indications which his conduct gave of his determined resolution to conquer them, and that they had still abundance of provisions, he was compelled, after a year had been wasted in the blockade, to commence a more active course of operations. The City of Candahar stood on the face of a hill, and was defended by a wall, and by a number of small towers. The Persians made themselves masters of some of the most commanding eminences, to which they conveyed, with incredible labour, both cannon and mortars. Aided by the fire of these, they successively assailed the different towers. At some they were repulsed with great loss; at others they succeeded: but the bravery of the corps of Bukhteeârees, who have been before mentioned, was successful in carrying a principal tower,

Commences more active operations. A. D. 1738. A. H. 1151.

* After Candahar was taken, almost all the inhabitants removed to this new city, which, after the death of its founder, received the name of Candahar. The modern Candahar is close to the site of the old city.

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 258.

which enabled them to enter the citadel, and placed the whole town at their mercy. The governor, however, with the principal part of the garrison, still held out in a detached fort; but, seeing that resistance was vain, he offered to capitulate: and Nâdir readily gave him a promise of forgiveness and protection. It appears at this period to have been the policy of the conqueror to conciliate the Affghans. He had, in a very great degree, disarmed the prejudices of that nation, by the proclamation which he issued on ascending the throne against the tenets of the Sheahs; and he now sought, not merely to soften their resentment, but to attach them to his person and government by favours. He completely succeeded: some of the tribes of that nation continued, during his life, to rank among the bravest soldiers of his army, and formed a powerful check upon the discontent and turbulence of his own countrymen.

Candahar capitulates.

While Nâdir was employed in besieging Candahar, his generals had been successful in reducing the strong holds in its vicinity: and his eldest son, Rezâ Kooli, had, during this short period, obtained a fame, which seemed to promise that his name would one day equal that of his father. The Affghan prince of Candahar had expected aid from the chief of Bulkh, against whom Nâdir detached his son, with a chosen body of twelve thousand horse. The prince not only defeated this ruler, and took his capital, but passed the Oxus, and did not hesitate to give battle to the monarch of the Usbegs, who had advanced from Bokharah with an army far outnumbering the Persians*. The rash valour of Rezâ Kooli was crowned with a signal victory: and the career of the young hero

His generals reduce the strong holds in the vicinity of Candahar.

Defeats the chief of Bulkh, and passes the Oxus.

Gains a victory over the Usbegs.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 266.

CHAP. XVII.

was only arrested by a mandate from his father, who desired him to recross the Oxus. Nâdir at the same time addressed letters to the King of the Usbegs, and to the other chiefs of that part of Tartary, informing them, that he had sent orders to his son to retreat within the limits of the Persian empire, and not to disturb countries which were the inheritance of the race of Chenghiz Khan, and of high Turkoman families.

Nâdir recalls him.

His motives for doing so.

This conduct, which was evidently the result of that policy which affects moderation, that it may better accomplish its ambitious purposes, has been ascribed by some to a jealousy which they conceive Nâdir, even at this early period, entertained of the rising reputation of his son: but those who impute it to this cause, forget that Rezâ Kooli, when he returned, was not only received with extraordinary favour and affection, but soon afterwards was intrusted with all the power of a sovereign, and left to govern Persia, while his father proceeded with his vast designs of subjugating to his authority the distant regions of India.

Result of Nâdir's mission to the Emperor of Delhi.

When Nâdir Shah marched against the Affghans, he had sent an ambassador to Dehli, requesting the monarch of India would give orders to the governors of his northern provinces not to permit the enemies of Persia to find a refuge from an avenging sword, in the territories of an ally*. No satisfactory answer had been received to this mission: and, while the Affghans were allowed to take shelter within the limits of the Indian empire, obstacles were thrown in the way of the return of the Persian envoy. Nâdir, incensed at these proceedings, pursued the fugitives to Cabul, and not only made himself

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 278.

master of that city, but of all the country in its vicinity*. After this conquest, he addressed another letter to the Emperor of India, in which he reproached him, in the bitterest terms, for his past conduct; but still professed a desire of maintaining the relations of friendship. The bearer of this letter was slain by an Affghan chief†: and Nâdir, perhaps, did not regret an event, which added to the pretexts that before existed to justify him to the world, in undertaking the most splendid of all his enterprises,—the invasion of India.

Takes Cabul, and all the country in its vicinity.

Addresses another letter to the Emperor of Delhi.

The bearer of the letter slain by an Affghan chief.

Before the events which attended this memorable expedition are narrated, it may be useful to make some observations on the actual condition of that great empire, which was threatened with destruction. India had been frequently overrun by the hardy warriors of the north. Since the invasion of Mahmood of Ghizni, Hindoo princes had ceased to reign; and it had continued subject to different dynasties of Mahomedan monarchs, who, in their turns, were overthrown by powerful conquerors. The destructive sword of Timour had desolated those fields which, after a series of extraordinary revolutions, were destined to flourish under his descendants; and the scenes of his bloodiest and most inhuman massacres, by a strange vicissitude of fortune, became those in which his name, as the renowned ancestor of a long race of emperors, was most venerated.

Condition of India at the period of its conquest by Nâdir Shah.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 282.

† The name of the chief by whom the Persian envoy was slain, was Wâled Abbas: he was Governor of Jellalabad.—Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir WILLIAM JONES's *Works*, Vol. V. page 284.

CHAP. XVII.

His descendant, Baber, had been driven from his own inheritance* on the banks of the Jaxartes by the superior numbers of the Usbegs; but, supported by the attachment of his followers, and his own great qualities, he first established himself in the country of Cabul, and then made himself master of the throne of Dehli, which attained its greatest splendour under his grandson, the celebrated Ackbar. We may date the commencement of its decline from the death of that truly great sovereign: but the appearance, if not the reality, of its former glory was revived by the art, the wisdom, and the valour, of Aurungzebe†, who was the last prince of the race of Timour that ever enjoyed real power: for, besides that common cause of dissolution in all such empires, the turbulence and rebellion of those families of high nobles who, from the constitution of its government, were intrusted with great military power, and the charge of distant provinces, a race of Hindoos had arisen in the southern parts of India, who threatened, by their bold and incessant depredations, to retaliate upon their Mahomedan conquerors all the evils which those had inflicted upon their ancestors.

The Marhattas, among whom are found the four classes of Hindoos, derive their name from the ancient appellation of that region‡ of India of which they are natives. They are, to speak in the language of modern geography, inhabitants of the Deckan. They first became formidable in the reign of Shah Jehan: and, during thirty years that Aurungzebe passed in the southern pro-

* The province of Ferghanah. † The great-grandson of Ackbar. ‡ Maharashtra.

vinces of his empire, his chief occupation was to subdue the Marhattas; but this he found impossible, for they never awaited his attack. The country was laid waste, and his troops continually harassed by men, who, from the lightness of their frames, were no burden to their horses; and who, from habits of hardihood and abstemiousness, required little either for shelter or support. It seemed in vain to war with a foe who was intangible, and whose glory lay in the rapidity of his retreat; for the Marhatta soldier, though brave, boasts more of his power to elude, than to attack his enemy. CHAP. XVII.

When the empire of India fell to pieces at the death of Aurungzebe, and Mahomedan princes and nobles were all ranged against each other, the Marhattas, by continuing united, made a rapid and surprising progress. Besides the great possessions which they actually occupied, they had compelled not only the paramount sovereign of India, but almost every ruler of a province, to pay them a considerable part of their annual collections *, that their habitations and fields might remain in safety. At the period when Nâdir threatened invasion, the City of Dehli itself was subject to this disgraceful tribute †.

Mahomed Shah, the ruling emperor, was a weak and dissolute prince. Cotemporary authors have told us, " that he was never " without a mistress in his arms, and a glass in his hand ‡:" and, hating occupation, he intrusted others with the entire management of his empire. His principal vizier was Khan Douran Khan; who,

* This was levied under various names of Choute, Desmookee, &c.

† Sier Mutâkhereen.

‡ Nâdir Nâmâh.

CHAP. XVII. though fond of power, was also devoted to pleasure. The chief rival of this minister was Nizam-ul-mulk, the Subadar, or Viceroy of the Deckan, who had been called to court with no friendly view, and to whose experience and wisdom his monarch had not resort till the danger became imminent and alarming. This nobleman has been accused of having invited the Persian monarch to invade India. There is, however, no proof of this fact; nor can we assign any reasonable motive for such traitorous conduct in one of the first and most powerful omrahs of the empire: but imputed treachery is ever the shield with which incompetence and cowardice seek to defend themselves. The real truth was, that the distracted and despicable Court of Dehli, sensible of their own weakness, tried to persuade themselves that Nâdir would not advance. They had formed an exaggerated opinion of the strength of Candahar, and the valour of its defenders; and when they learnt its fall, they expected the Persian monarch would return to his own dominions. Even when they heard he was at Cabul, they still thought some event might compel him to retire; and this stupid infatuation was hardly dispelled by hearing that he had crossed the Indus. Roused, however, at last to a sense of the great danger with which the empire was threatened, Mahomed Shah, attended by his court, and all the troops he could collect, marched to the plain of Karnal, a village situated on the right bank of the Jumna river, about a degree to the northward of Dehli, where he surrounded his camp with entrenchments, on which were mounted a useless train of heavy artillery.

Mahomed Shah collects an army, and proceeds to Karnal. A. D. 1738. A. H. 1151.

The progress of Nâdir from Cabul to India was rapid and successful: almost all the governors of the principal provinces through which he passed, anticipated the fate of the empire by

Nâdir's rapid and successful progress. A. D. 1738. A. H. 1151.

their submission: but the conqueror has, in a letter to his son, Rezâ Kooli, given us the most authentic account we could desire to possess, of events from the day on which he left Lahore, till that on which he resolved to restore the vanquished Mahomed Shah to the throne of his ancestors. After informing that prince of an advantage which his troops had gained over an advanced party of his enemies, and describing an ineffectual attempt he had made to prevent the junction of an army under Saadut Khan with Mahomed Shah, he states, that the Indian monarch considered himself so strong from this reinforcement, that he left his entrenchments, and drew up his troops in order of battle. The result will be best told in Nâdir's own words.

Letter to his son, Rezâ Kooli.

"We," he observes, "whose wishes were for such a day, after "appointing guards for our camp, and invoking the support of an "all-powerful Creator, mounted, and advanced to the charge. For "two complete hours the action raged with violence, and a heavy fire "from cannon and musquetry was kept up. After that, by the aid "of the Almighty, our lion-hunting heroes broke the enemy's line, "and chased them from the field of battle, dispersing them in every "direction*. This battle lasted two hours; and for two hours and "a half more were our conquering soldiers engaged in pursuit. "When one hour of the day remained, the field was entirely cleared "of the enemy; and as the entrenchments of their camp were strong, "and the fortifications formidable, we would not permit our army to "assault it.

Description of his battle with the Indian army.
A. D. 1739.
A. H. 1152.

* He here enumerates the principal chiefs of the Indian army that were killed, severely wounded, or taken prisoners: among the former was Khan Douran, the prime minister; and among the latter, Saadut Khan, the general.

CHAP. XVII.

"An immense treasure, a number of elephants, part of the "artillery of the emperor, and rich spoils of every description, were "the reward of our victory. Upwards of twenty thousand of the "enemy were slain on the field of battle, and a much greater number "were made prisoners. Immediately after the action was over, we "surrounded the emperor's army, and took measures to prevent all "communication with the adjacent country; preparing at the same "time our cannon and mortars to level with the ground the fortifica- "tions which had been erected.

"As the utmost confusion reigned in the imperial camp, and all "discipline was abandoned, the emperor, compelled by irresistible "necessity, after the lapse of one day, sent Nizam-ul-mulk, on "Thursday, the seventeenth Zilkadeh*, to our royal camp; and the "day following, Mahomed Shah himself, attended by his nobles, "came to our heaven-like presence, in an afflicted state.

Mahomed Shah goes to the camp of Nâdir. A. D. 1739. A. H. 1152. His reception.

"When the emperor was approaching, as we are ourselves of a "Turkoman family, and Mahomed Shah is a Turkoman, and the "lineal descendant of the noble House of Gurgan †, we sent our "dear son, Nasser Aly Khan, beyond the bounds of our camp to "meet him. The emperor entered our tents, and we delivered over "to him the signet of our empire ‡. He remained that day a guest "in our royal tent. Considering our affinity as Turkomans, and also "reflecting on the honours that befitted the majesty of a king of "kings; we bestowed such upon the emperor, and ordered his

* Corresponding with the nineteenth of February.

† This is the common appellation of the House of Timour.

‡ This mode of reception was as distinguished as if the Emperor of Dehli had visited Nâdir in peace. It was, in fact, treating him as a superior.

"royal pavilions, his family, and his nobles, to be preserved; and "we have established him in a manner equal to his great dignity.

"At this time, the emperor, with his family, and all the lords of "Hindostan, who marched from camp, are arrived at Dehli: and on "Thursday, the twenty-ninth of Zilkadeh*, we moved our glorious "standard toward that capital.

"It is our royal intention, from the consideration of the high "birth of Mahomed Shah, of his descent from the House of Gurgan, "and of his affinity to us as a Turkoman, to fix him on the throne "of the empire, and to place the crown of royalty upon his head. "Praise be to God, glory to the Most High, who has granted us the "power to perform such an action! For this great grace which we "have received from the Almighty, we must ever remain grateful.

"God has made the seven great seas like unto the vapour of the "desert, beneath our glorious and conquering footsteps, and those of "our faithful and victorious heroes. He has made, in our royal "mind, the thrones of kings, and the deep ocean of earthly glory, "more despicable than the light bubble that floats upon the surface "of the wave; and no doubt his extraordinary mercy, which he has "now shown, will be evident to all mankind †."

The facts stated in this letter are not contradicted either by Persian or Indian historians: though the latter find reasons for the great defeat their countrymen suffered at Karnal, in the rashness of some of their leaders, and the caution of others: and they state, that even after the victory the conqueror would have returned to Persia

* Corresponding with the third of March.

† A full translation of this remarkable letter will be found in the tenth volume of the Asiatic Researches.

CHAP. XVII. on receiving two millions sterling, if the disappointed ambition of an Indian omrah* had not urged him to advance to Dehli. But it is not necessary to seek for causes for the overthrow of an army, who were so panic-struck that they fled at the first charge, and nearly twenty thousand of whom were slain with hardly any loss to their enemies†: and our knowledge of the character of Nâdir Shah forbids our granting any belief to a tale, which would make it appear, that the ultimate advantages to be obtained from this great enterprise, and the unparalleled success with which it had been attended, depended less upon his genius, than upon the petty jealousies and intrigues of the captive ministers of the vanquished Mahomed Shah.

Pretexts and motives which led to the invasion of India.

The causes which led Nâdir to invade India have been already stated: nor were they groundless. The Court of Dehli had certainly not observed the established ties of friendship. It had given shelter to the Affghans who fled from the sword of the conqueror; and this protection was likely to enable them to make another effort to regain their lost possessions, and consequently to reinvolve Persia in war. The ambassadors of Nâdir, who had been sent to make remonstrances on this subject, had not only been refused an answer, but were prevented from returning, in defiance of the reiterated and impatient applications of that monarch. This proceeding, we are told,

* Saadut Khan, who had been taken prisoner, negotiated this agreement. He expected, as a reward, to be made prime minister; and when he heard that office was given to Nizam-ul-mulk, he advised Nâdir Shah to advance, and obtain better terms.—SCOTT's *Translation of the History of the Deckan*, Vol. II. page 204.

† Nâdir is said only to have lost five hundred men: this probably is below the number. Fraser, in his life of this conqueror, states the loss of the Persians at two thousand five hundred killed: but this appears, from all other accounts, to be exaggerated.

originated more in irresolution and indecision, than from a spirit of hostility: but it undoubtedly furnished a fair and justifiable pretext for Nâdir's advance. Regarding the other motives which induced him to undertake this enterprise, we can conjecture none but an insatiable desire of plunder, a wish to exercise that military spirit he had kindled in the Persians, or the ambitious view of annexing the vast dominions of the Sovereign of Dehli to the Crown of Persia. But if he ever cherished this latter project, he must have been led, by a near view of the condition of the empire of India, to reject it as wholly impracticable. We are, however, compelled to respect the greatness of that mind, which could resolve, at the very moment of its achievement, upon the entire abandonment of so great a conquest: for he did not even try to establish a personal interest at the Court of Dehli, except through the operation of those sentiments, which his generous conduct in replacing him upon his throne might make upon the mind of Mahomed Shah *.

* Nâdir, it is true, did not wholly abstain from adding to his possessions; but the provinces he reclaimed had before belonged to Persia. In a treaty concluded with Mahomed Shah, that monarch ceded the countries beyond the Indus, which was made the boundary between the two empires. The following translation of the document by which Mahomed Shah made this cession, has been preserved by a cotemporary writer. It is an extraordinary paper, and was no doubt dictated by the conqueror.

" Formerly, the ministers of his high majesty (who is exalted like Saturn, fierce as
" Mars, impetuous as the god of war, king of the kings of the earth, prince of the
" princes of the age, the shadow of God and refuge of Islam, in pomp like Alexander,
" the heavens his court, the sultan who is merciful, and the emperor who is august,
" Nâdir Shah, may God perpetuate his reign,) had sent ambassadors to this court, to
" treat of certain affairs, which I intended to comply with: afterwards Mahomed Khan
" Turkoman arrived from Candahar, to remind me thereof; but my ministers and agents

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir seizes the royal treasures.

Nâdir claimed, as a prize which he had won, the wealth of the emperor, and a great proportion of that of his richest nobles and subjects. The whole of the jewels that had been collected by a

" having delayed the ambassadors, and postponed an answer to his majesty's letter, " raised such a misunderstanding between us, that his successful army, having come to " the confines of Hindostan, both parties encountered in the fields of Karnal; where, " after a royal battle was fought, as Providence would have it, victory, to appearance, " rose from the east of his undeclining fortune. As his high majesty, who is mighty as " Jemsheed, and the greatest of the Turkomans, is the source of goodness and prowess, " relying on his honour, and trusting to his support, I had the satisfaction of an inter- " view, and enjoyed the pleasure of being entertained in his paradise-like company. " After which, we came together to Shahjehanabad, where I brought forth to his view, " and with the proper ceremony presented to him, all the treasure, jewels, and precious " effects of the Hindostan emperor. His majesty, in compliance with my request, " accepted of some: and out of the greatness of his soul, and abundant humanity, in " regard to the illustrious family of Gurgan, and the honour of the original tree of " Turkan, was graciously pleased to restore to me the crown and gem of Hindostan.

" In consideration of this favour, which no father shows to a son, nor no brother to " a brother, I make over to him all the countries to the west of the River Attock, the " water of Scind, and Nala Sunkra, which is a branch of the water of Scind: that is to " say, Paishawur with its territories, the principality of Cabul, Ghuznavi, the mountain- " ous residences of the Affghans, the Hazarijat and the passes, with the Castle of " Buckar, Sunkar, and Khodhâdâd: the rest of the territories, passes, and abodes of the " Chokias, Baloochees, &c., with the Province of Tatta, the Castle of Ram, and the " Village of Terbin, the towns of Chun, Sumawali, and Ketra, &c., places dependent " on Tatta: all their fields, villages, castles, towns, and ports, from the first rise of the " River Attock, with all the passes and habitations which the abovesaid water and its " several branches comprehend and surround, as far as Nala Sunkra, where it empties " itself into the sea. In short, all places westward of the River Attock, and those parts, " and westward of the River Scind, and Nala Sunkra, I have annexed to the do- " minions of that powerful sovereign; and, from henceforth, his agents and servants " may enter upon and set about the management and the securing of the abovesaid

long race of sovereigns, and all the contents of the imperial treasury, were made over by Mahomed Shah to the conqueror. The principal nobles, imitating the example of their monarch, gave up all the money and valuables which they possessed. After these voluntary gifts (as they were termed,) had been received, arrears of revenue were demanded from distant provinces*, and heavy impositions were laid upon the richest of the inhabitants of Dehli. The great misery caused by these impositions was considerably augmented, by the corrupt and base character of the Indian agents employed, who actually farmed the right of extortion of the different quarters of the city, to wretches who made immense fortunes by the inhuman speculation†; and who collected, for every ten thousand rupees they paid into Nâdir's treasury, forty and fifty thousand

Arrears of revenue demanded from the provinces.

Corruption and baseness of the agents employed in collecting the impositions laid on Dehli.

" territories, taking the government and command of those several places, tribes, and " inhabitants into their own hands; my officers, servants, &c., evacuating the above- " said places, as being severed from my dominions, and renouncing all right they have " or might formerly have had to command, control, or collect any revenues there: " the castle and town of Lohry Bunder, with all the countries to the east of the River " Attock, water of Scind, and Nala Sunkra, shall, as formerly, belong to the empire of " Hindostan. Dated at Shahjehanabad, the fourth of Mohurrum, 1152."—FRASER'S *History of Nâdir Shah*, page 223.

* We are informed by a respectable author, that " a very short time after " Serferaz Khan had taken possession of the government (of Bengal), and before " he was confirmed in it, a messenger, sent by the vizier, Kummer-addeen Khan, " announced the arrival of Nâdir Shah at Dehli, and demanded the revenues of the " three last years. Serferaz Khan, by the advice of Hajee Ahmed, and the other " two counsellors, not only paid the money, but actually ordered coin to be struck, " and the Khootbeh to be read from the pulpits, in the name of Nâdir Shah.— STEWART'S *History of Bengal*, page 434.

† Scott's Translation of the History of the Deckan, Vol. II. page 211.

CHAP. XVII. from the unhappy inhabitants, numbers of whom perished under blows that were inflicted to make them reveal their wealth; while others, among whom were several Hindoos of high rank, became their own executioners, rather than bear the insults to which they were exposed, or survive the loss of that property which they valued more than their existence*.

The approach of Nâdir Shah to Dehli had filled the inhabitants of that city with dread; but the strict discipline which his troops observed on their first arrival, restored confidence to all. This, however, was but of short duration. The monarch himself had occupied a palace in the city, and had sent some troops to different quarters of it to maintain tranquillity, and to protect the inhabitants from insult or injury†. The conqueror entered the capital on the eighth of March, and on that and the two succeeding days all was quiet; but on the night of the tenth it was reported that Nâdir was dead. This report, which was first circulated by some designing persons, instantly spread, and a thoughtless mob made a furious assault upon the Persians, who were scattered about the town as safeguards. These, who were divided in small parties, and quite unsuspicious of attack, were almost all murdered: and we must cease to cherish any general sentiments of pity for the depraved nobles of Dehli, when assured, by concurring authorities, that

A report is spread of Nâdir's death. A. D. 1739. A. H. 1152.

The inhabitants commence a furious attack on the Persians.

* Among the higher classes of Hindoos, suicide to prevent disgrace is very common. There is no race in the world who, from their frugal habits, have so little apparent use for money, and who are so devotedly fond of it.

† Orders were issued by Nâdir, that if any of his troops should insult an Indian, the nose and ears of the offender should instantly be cut off.—FRASER's *Life of Nâdir Shah*, page 179.

most of those, at whose palaces troops were stationed for their protection, gave them up without effort to the fury of the populace, and even in some instances assisted in their destruction *.

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir in vain endeavours to undeceive the populace.

Nâdir, when he first heard of this tumult, sent several persons to explain to the populace their delusion and their danger: but his messengers were slain. He remained with all the Persians he could assemble in the palace which he occupied till the day dawned, when he mounted his horse, and rode forth to endeavour, by his presence, to quell the tumult †. But his moderation only inflamed the insolence and fury of those whom (even Indian historians inform us,) it was his desire to spare ‡: and he at last gave his troops, who had arrived from their encampment near the city, orders for a general massacre. He was too well obeyed: the populace, the moment the Persians began to act, lost all their courage; and, from sunrise till twelve o'clock, Dehli presented a scene of shocking carnage, the horrors of which were increased by the flames that now spread to almost every quarter of that capital.

Orders a general massacre.

Nâdir, after he had issued the fatal orders, went into the small mosque of Rosheen-u-dowlah, which stands near the centre of the city, and remained there in a deep and silent gloom that none dared to disturb. At last the unhappy Mahomed Shah, attended by two of his ministers, rushed into his presence, exclaiming, "Spare my "people!" Nâdir replied: "The Emperor of India must never

Which is stopped at the intercession of the Emperor of India.

* Scott's Translation of the History of the Deckan, Vol. II. page 207. † Ibid.

‡ All authors agree in this fact. Fraser, who was a cotemporary, and writes from a journal kept on the scene, says, that a shot was fired at Nâdir himself, which missed him, but killed one of his principal officers, and that he then gave loose to his indignation.

CHAP. XVII. "ask in vain:" and he instantly commanded that the massacre should cease*. The prompt obedience which was given to this command, is remarked, by all his historians, as the strongest proof of the strict discipline which he had introduced into his army.

Number of the slain.

The number of persons slain on this occasion has been differently estimated, and, from the nature of the scene, it could not be correctly ascertained. An author†, who has been often referred to, conjectures that about one hundred and twenty thousand perished; while another European writer‡ nearly doubles this amount. But an Indian historian|| of respectability reduces this exaggerated estimate to the moderate calculation of eight thousand persons: and there is every reason to conclude that his statement is nearer the truth than any of those which have been mentioned. Two nobles, who were supposed to have caused the riot, fled, with conscious guilt, to a small fortress near Dehli. They were pursued, taken, and put to death with those who were deemed their accomplices, who amounted to about four hundred persons.

Marriage between the son of Nâdir and the daughter of the Emperor of India.

A very few days after the occurrence of these events, a marriage was celebrated between the second son of Nâdir and a princess of the Imperial House of Timour; and the succession of festivities that attended these nuptials, gave a colour of joy to scenes which abounded with misery: but the majority of the inhabitants of Dehli appear to have been of a light and dissolute character. We are, indeed, told by an Indian author §, that numbers regretted the departure of the

* Fraser's History of Nâdir Shah, page 184.

† Ibid. page 185. ‡ Otther.

|| Scott's Translation of the History of the Deckan, Vol. II. page 207.

§ Ibid. page 214.

Persians. The drolls and players of the capital began, immediately after they went away, to amuse their countrymen with a ludicrous representation of their own disgrace; and the fierce looks and savage pride of their conquerors, which had been so late their dread, became, in these imitations, one of their chief sources of entertainment.

Nâdir's advice to the emperor and his officers previous to quitting Dehli.

Nâdir remained at Dehli fifty-eight days. Before he quitted it, he had a long and secret conference with Mahomed Shah, in which it is supposed he gave him such counsel as he deemed best, to enable him to preserve that power to which he was restored. To all the nobles of the court he spoke publicly, and warned them to preserve their allegiance to the emperor, as they valued his favour, or dreaded his resentment. To those who were absent he wrote in similar terms: he informed them, that he was so united in friendship with Mahomed Shah, that they might be esteemed as having one soul in two bodies: and, after desiring them to continue to walk in the path of duty to the Imperial House of Timour, he concluded these circular letters in the following words: " May God forbid! but if accounts of your " rebelling against your emperor should reach our ears, we will blot " you out of the pages of the book of creation."

The conqueror had behaved with considerable moderation and kindness towards the chief omrahs of the Court of Dehli; but he must have despised their luxurious and effeminate habits. We, indeed, learn his sentiments from a remarkable anecdote. When speaking one day to Kummer-u-deen, who was then vizier, he demanded how many ladies he had *? " Eight hundred and fifty,"

* A chief of the tribe of Affshâr informed me, that his father (who was one of Nâdir's generals,) used often to praise the great continence of that monarch, who never, he said, had more than two wives with him when in the field, and was displeased with any leader who was accompanied by more than one.

CHAP. XVII. was the reply.—"Let one hundred and fifty of our female "captives," said Nâdir, "be sent to the vizier, who will then "be entitled to the high military rank of a Mim-bâshee, or "'commander of a thousand*.'"

Amount of the plunder obtained by Nâdir.

The march of Nâdir from India was literally encumbered with spoil. The amount of the plunder that he carried from that country has been estimated variously. The highest calculation makes it upwards of seventy millions sterling; the lowest is considerably more than thirty. A great part of this was in precious stones, of which Nâdir was immoderately fond. When on his march from India, he was informed that several of the most valuable crown jewels had been secreted by some of his followers. He made this a pretext for searching the baggage of every man in his army, and appropriating all the jewels that were found to himself. The soldiers murmured†, but submitted; and their not resisting this despotic act, is an extraordinary proof of the subordination which he had established. He was, however, in general kind and liberal to his troops: he had given to each man a gratuity of three months' pay at the fall of Candahar‡; he gave them as much more after the victory of Karnal; and they received a still greater bounty before he marched from Dehli.

Searches the baggage of every man in his army, and takes all the jewels to himself.

* Persian MS.

† Hanway, who records the particulars of this occurrence, says, some of the soldiers were so enraged, that they threw the jewels they had plundered into the river Indus, on the banks of which they were encamped, rather than deliver them to the officers appointed to search.—HANWAY, Vol. II. page 392.

I have heard many Persian noblemen, when speaking on this subject, refer the conduct of Nâdir more to policy than avarice. He feared, they affirmed, his soldiers would be spoiled by wealth.

‡ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 307.

CHAP. XVII.

His troops suffer in their retreat from India.

The troops of Nâdir, we are told, suffered much in their retreat from India by the intense heat to which they were exposed. Their passage over the rivers of the Punjaub and the Indus was delayed by accidents to the temporary bridges which he had constructed, and in one instance by the threatened attack of the mountaineers of Cabul, whose forbearance the proud conqueror did not disdain to purchase*: and when we consider the nature of the country through which he had to pass, the immense train of baggage with which his army was accompanied, and the danger that might have arisen from the slightest confusion, we cannot blame the prudence with which he acted upon this occasion.

Persia rejoices at the prospect of the return of her monarch. A. D. 1740. A. H. 1153. Three years' taxes are remitted.

Exaggerated reports of the wealth of the sovereign and his soldiers.

The greatest expectation was excited in Persia at the prospect of the return of their victorious monarch. The inhabitants of that country had already felt the benefit of his triumphs. He had commanded that all taxes should be remitted for three years: and they began to anticipate scenes of unheard-of joy and abundance. The most exaggerated reports were circulated of the vast riches which their sovereign and his soldiers had acquired; and all conceived that Nâdir was disposed to enjoy himself, from the number of artificers and musicians which he brought from India. Curiosity too was eager to behold the train of elephants which attended his march. That noble animal had become a stranger to the plains of Persia; and the natives of that country were only familiar with its shape, from seeing its figure represented in the sculpture of ancient times. Sanguine minds were led, by a natural association of ideas, to believe that their present ruler was the destined restorer of their country to its former glory; and the

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 392.

CHAP. XVII. conqueror was hailed, at his return, as a hero, whose fame had eclipsed that of a Sapor, or a Nousheerwan.

The soldiers of Nâdir were, we are informed, after the expedition to India, most anxious for repose: but that prince was too well acquainted with the consequences of this indulgence to permit them to enjoy it. He had, after he passed the Indus, led them through the deserts of Scind to the attack of a feudatory chief, who had established himself in the government of that province*. This ruler had courted Nâdir Shah when he first threatened the invasion of India, as he deemed such a measure favourable to his views of independence;

Nâdir attacks the ruler of Scind.

* I find the following account of this transaction in a Memoir, transmitted by Mr. N. H. Smith, late envoy from the supreme government of India to the ruler of Scind.

" In the reign of Mahomed Shah, when the alarm excited by the threatened " invasion of India by Nâdir Shah had become general, Meer Noor Mahomed " Ubassee Caloree, whose hereditary possessions consisted of the province of " Sewee, also called Seree, and other districts, and who not only exercised the " functions of executive power in those provinces, but possessed a spiritual autho- " rity over several military chiefs, who considered themselves bound to pay him " obedience on the ground of the sanctity of his family, availed himself of the appre- " hensions of Sadiq Ulee Khan, the Soubahdar of Scind on the part of Mahomed " Shah, respecting the attempts of Nâdir Shah to persuade that officer, in the 1150th " year of the Hejirah, to transfer the government of Scind to him for the sum of three " lacks of rupees, part of which sum has remained unpaid to the present day. Nâdir " Shah, having in the year 1152 of the Hejirah defeated the Caloree army, compelled " the chiefs of the family to take refuge in Amerkote, a fort situated in the desert. " An arrangement, however, was ultimately made, by which the Calorees were per- " mitted by the conqueror to retain the government of Scind, on condition of paying " a yearly tribute to the sovereigns of Persia: and this appears to have been regularly " paid by the first of these princes. After the death of Meean Noor Mahomed " Caloree, which took place in the year 1185 of the Hejirah, eight princes of the

CHAP. XVII.

but when his possessions were made over to the Persian monarch, he changed his policy; and, lodging all his treasure and property in the Fortress of Amerkote*, made a feeble attempt at opposition; but his capital was taken and plundered, and he was compelled to surrender himself to the mercy of the conqueror; who, however, satisfied with his submission, and the possession of his wealth, restored him to the government of the province, which he agreed henceforward to hold as a tributary to the Crown of Persia.

Takes and plunders his capital.

Restores the governor to his province.

After this expedition, Nâdir marched to Herat†, where he made a proud display of the jewels and plunder he had acquired in India; among which, the most remarkable was, the celebrated throne of the Emperor of Dehli‡, made in the shape of a peacock, and ornamented with precious stones of every description. This gorgeous exhibition took place on the fourth of June; and on that day, and several others, the court, army, and populace, were amused with pageants, shows, and entertainments of every kind: but Nâdir, though satisfied that this public celebration of triumph was calcu-

A. D. 1740. A. H. 1153. Marches to Herat, and makes a display of his wealth.

A. D. 1740. A. H. 1153.

" Caloree family, in regular succession, reigned in Scind, until the year 1197 of the " Hejirah, when Meer Futteh Ulee Talpooree effected the expulsion of Ubdool Nubee, " the last of the Caloree princes, and established the present dynasty of that country." —Mr. Smith's *MS.*

* This town, which is in the province of Scind, is situated in 26° 23′ north latitude, and in 116° 25′ east longitude. It at present acknowledges the authority of the Hindoo Rajah of Joudpore. This city derives its fame in history from being the birthplace of Ackbar. His father, Hoomâyoon, when he fled from India, first took refuge with the Rajah of Amerkote; and his celebrated son was born at that city in the year 1541.

† He entered that city on the 26th of May, 1740.

‡ We are told, that Nâdir was so fond of this throne, that he had an exact duplicate of it made from other jewels.

CHAP. XVII. lated to raise his fame with his subjects, and to gratify the vanity of his soldiers, appears always to have dreaded the danger of inaction.

Moves his army from Herat.

He moved his army from Herat: and after meeting his son, Rezâ Kooli, and bestowing valuable presents upon him and the other princes of his family, he moved towards Bulkh, where he had ordered preparations to be made for his crossing the Oxus to punish the Sovereign of Bokharah, who, unmindful of his established alliance, had taken advantage of his absence in India to make inroads into the Province of Khorassan,

Proceeds towards Bulkh.

His motives for undertaking this expedition.

The motives which induced Nâdir to proceed upon this expedition were soon apparent. He had no desire to extend the boundary of his empire in a direction where he knew it could not be maintained, but he wished to visit upon the inhabitants of this part of Tartary those calamities which they were in the annual habit of inflicting upon the frontier provinces of Persia. Abool Fyze Khan, who was the ruler of the Usbegs at this period, boasted a lineal descent from Chenghiz: but he appears to have inherited none of the spirit of his great ancestor. He was terrified into submission at the approach of Nâdir, and sent his vizier to deprecate the wrath of that monarch. The minister was well received; but told, that his master must immediately surrender, if he desired to save himself from destruction, and his country from ruin*. While these negotiations were carried on, the Persian army advanced, by rapid marches, to Bokharah†; and on the twenty-third of August, five days after they had crossed the Oxus, encamped within twelve miles of that capital,

A. D. 1740. A. H. 1153.

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 328.

† This city is not more than fifty miles from the Oxus: but Nâdir had crossed higher up that stream than where it approaches nearest to Bokharah.

where this short expedition was brought to a close by the personal submission of Abool Fyze Khan, who, attended by all his court, proceeded to the tents of Nâdir Shah, and laid his crown, and other ensigns of royalty, at the feet of the conqueror, who assigned him an honourable place in his assembly; and a few days afterwards restored him to his throne, on the condition that the Oxus should remain, as it had been in former periods, the boundary of the two empires. This treaty was cemented by an alliance between the daughter of the ruler of Bokhârah and the nephew of his conqueror; and, after its conclusion, a great number of Tartars were, with the concurrence of their own monarch, enrolled in the Persian army, whose commander probably esteemed the services of these hardy warriors as of more consequence to the peace of his own dominions, and the fulfilment of his future views of ambition, than all the wealth he had brought from India.

The ruler of the Usbegs personally submits, and gives up his crown.

He is restored to his throne.

The arms of Nâdir were next directed against the kingdom of Khaurizm, which is situated to the westward of Bokharah, and stretches along both banks of the Oxus, to the shores of the Caspian Sea. The prince of this country (whose name was Ilburz,) neither merited nor received such humane treatment as Abool Fyze Khan. He had committed frequent depredations upon the Persian territories; and, conceiving that the strength of his fortresses would secure him from vengeance, he resolved on resistance. The King of Bokharah had sent a mission to advise him to submit to the arms of Nâdir: he not only treated this friendly counsel with disdain, but, in violation of laws which the most savage nations respect, he slew those through whom it was conveyed. This conduct greatly irritated the monarch of Persia, who, after he had defeated his

Nâdir makes war upon the kingdom of Khaurizm.

Whose ruler resolves on resistance.

CHAP. XVII.

He is made prisoner and put to death. And the rule is given to his cousin, Taher Khan.

A. D. 1740. A. H. 1153. Nâdir marches to Kelat.

army and made him prisoner, doomed him, and twenty of his chief officers, to death*. The possessions of Ilburz were bestowed upon Taher Khan, a cousin of the sovereign of Bokharah, and consequently a direct descendant of the celebrated Chenghiz†.

When the winter of this year was far advanced, Nâdir marched to Kelat‡, to which place he continued from his most early years to be much attached. He had directed that its fortifications should be improved; that a palace should be built; and that aqueducts should be constructed to improve the fertility of its fields. He had also ordered, that all his treasures should be carried thither: and a peaceful retirement to this cherished spot, after the toils and

* Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 335.

† Meerza Mehdy, in his History of Nâdir, styles this chief Taher Khan Nevadi Genghizi.—Sir WILLIAM JONES's *Works*, Vol. V. page 335.

‡ "Kelat is about a degree north of Mushed, on the road to Merv Shah Jehan, and "is situated in a very mountainous country, named Ashdar Koh, or 'the Mountains "of the Dragon.' It is a very high hill, accessible only by two narrow paths. After "an ascent of about seven miles, you reach a fine plain, nearly twelve miles in circuit, "watered by a multitude of little streams, and producing corn and rice in the greatest "abundance. The inhabitants of the mountains live in tents; and the only buildings "in this delightful valley are two towers, and a small marble edifice erected by Nâdir. "The towers were intended for the defence of the paths, and the house for the use of "his majesty. On quitting the valley, you continue to ascend; and, after travelling "about fifteen miles, gain the summit of the mountain, on which is another plain, not "so large, but equal in fertility to the former. Here are also two small towers, which "command the approaches, and are the only fortifications on the Castle of Kelat; the "strength of which, like the Kela Sufeed, consists in the steepness of the rock, and in "the difficulty of access to it. A single stone, hurled from the top, is sufficient to "stop the advance, if not to effect the destruction, of an enemy.—KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia,* page 176.

dangers of war were at an end, was one of the most innocent of those dreams which amused the fancy of this indefatigable conqueror.

Proceeds to Mushed, which he makes the capital of his empire. A.D. 1741. A.H. 1154.

After a short residence at Kelat, Nâdir proceeded to Mushed, which he had made the capital of his empire; and, during three months that he remained in this city, his time was passed in constant festivities. Five* monarchs had been subdued in five years. The empire of Persia had not only been rescued from a foreign yoke, but its limits had been extended as far as the Oxus to the north, and the Indus to the east; and the hero, by whom all this had been accomplished, promised his exulting subjects that the Turks should soon be driven from the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates: but honour required that, before any other expedition was undertaken, Nâdir should revenge the blood of his brother, Ibrahim Khan†, who had been slain in an attack of the Lesghees.

Resolves to revenge the blood of his brother, Ibrahim Khan.

When the army was on its march to Dâghestan, an event occurred which cast a dark cloud over all the fair prospects that dawned upon Persia, and exhibited, in the strongest view, the miserable condition of those empires whose fate hangs upon the disposition and talents of a despotic sovereign. An advanced corps, chiefly composed of Affghans, had, by their extraordinary valour, gained the greatest advantages over the Lesghees: and Nâdir was hastening by the way of Mazenderan to their support, when, pursuing his march through one of the forests in that country, a ball from an assassin, who had

A. D. 1741. A. H. 1154.

* The two Affghan princes, Ashrâff and Hussein; Mahomed Shah, Emperor of India; Abool Fyze, King of Bokharah; and Ilburz, ruler of Khaurizm.

† Ibrahim Khan was an active and brave man. He enjoyed the full confidence of his brother; and his sons, after his death, were considered as princes of the empire.

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir is wounded by an assassin.

concealed himself behind a tree, wounded him in the hand, and killed his horse. The prince, Rezâ Kooli, who was near him, galloped towards the spot from which the shot had been fired: but neither his efforts, nor those of the guards that aided him, could succeed in the attempt to seize the fugitive, who, favoured by the thickness of the wood, effected his escape. He was afterwards taken; and the historian* of Nâdir asserts, that he was the agent of a chief† of a barbarous tribe, who cherished a secret resentment against the conqueror.

Who escapes, but is afterwards taken. A. D. 1741. A. H. 1154.

This accident, though it made a deep and indelible impression upon the mind of Nâdir, did not prevent his proceeding to attack the Lesghees: but he never engaged in an enterprise of more hazard. These mountaineers defended themselves with the most desperate bravery: and the rugged nature of the whole country of Dâghestan, which they inhabit, made it almost impossible to subdue them. The bravest troops of the Persian army were worn out with the fatigue of this harassing war: and the preparations which the Russians began to make at Astracan, though dictated by a fear that Nâdir meant to invade their country after he had subdued the Lesghees‡, gave the latter every encouragement to persevere

The Lesghees defend themselves with bravery.

* Meerza Mehdy.

† Meerza Mehdy, the historian of Nâdir, states, that the name of this person was Aga Meerza, the son of Delavur, the chief of the tribe of Taimni. The assassin's name was Neek-Kuddum, who, he asserts, confessed his crime, and therefore only lost his eyes.

‡ We meet with the following observations of Hanway on this subject:—

" The Lesghees had intimated their desire of putting themselves under the protec-
" tion of Russia, from the time of Nâdir's first invading their country: and it certainly
" was the interest of that empire to support the independency of those brave moun-

in their resistance; and the Persian monarch was compelled to retire from this expedition with very partial success, and very great loss.

CHAP. XVII.

Nâdir is compelled to retire with partial success, but heavy loss.

Nâdir had, from the day on which his life was attempted, entertained suspicions of his eldest son, Rezâ Kooli. He summoned him

" taineers, who form so safe a barrier against the Persians. The arrival of the Russian " troops, indeed, contributed to defeat Nâdir's designs; and he found himself obliged " to abandon an enterprise to which his skill and fortune were not equal.

" As soon as the Russian general arrived in the neighbourhood of Dâghestan, the " Lesghees made application to him; and from an apprehension of the danger they " might be exposed to, in case Nâdir was determined to prosecute his design of redu- " cing them, they wrote to this commander as follows:

" Most honoured and most accomplished general and commander-in-chief,

" Our most humble petition consists in this: all the inhabitants of Dâghestan having " been informed that you are arrived near the frontiers of Kislar with an imperial army, " and that your intention is to defend and protect the subjects of her imperial majesty " in Andrewska, Koslkoff, and Baxan, as also all the chiefs and rulers of the states " bordering on the dominions of her imperial majesty, after longing expectations of " your arrival, we have sent our deputies in the name of the whole nation to desire " your intercession, that her imperial majesty may receive us under her puissant pro- " tection, and permit us to be her slaves. We are determined to hold the golden " border of her imperial robes, and, in spite of all the evils that may threaten us, we " will not be dragged from them, nor seek any other protection, nor acknowledge any " other sovereign than God and her imperial majesty.

" We hereby take a solemn oath of allegiance to her imperial majesty, whom we " most humbly implore to protect us against our enemies, and in her exalted clemency " to give a favourable answer to our petition. And that her puissant majesty may " know in what numbers our troops consist, we send you a list as follows."—Hanway, Vol. II. page 410.

They transmitted, with this letter, a summary of the forces that the different chiefs could raise, which amounted to sixty-six thousand: but this account of their strength must have been exaggerated.

CHAP. XVII. A. D. 1743. A. H. 1156. Deprives his son, Rezâ Kooli, of sight.

to his presence. The prince instantly obeyed; and was, on his arrival, made prisoner, and deprived of sight. A respectable European writer *, who went to Persia two years after this event, appears satisfied that the assassin who fired at Nâdir in the woods of Mazenderan, was employed by the prince, Rezâ Kooli; who, he informs us, though brave and able, was violent and oppressive. He had, this author asserts, on hearing that Nâdir was dead, when on his expedition to India, declared himself king; and, at the same time, put the unfortunate Shah Tâmâsp †, who was confined at Subzâwar, in Khorassan, to death. The same writer assures us, that Nâdir, though convinced of the guilt of his son, addressed him in the mildest and most humane terms, and offered him complete pardon if he would only confess his crime, and promise repentance; but that the fierce youth rejected this offer, and said he gloried in the attempt he had made to rid the world of a tyrant, and provoked his fate by the coarsest abuse of his father and sovereign. It is probable that this author received the account which he has given of this transaction from some person who was desirous of palliating the guilt of a reigning tyrant; but we are compelled to refuse our credit to this statement. The flattering historian of Nâdir expressly informs us, that that sovereign was deceived, by the gross misrepresentations of infamous men, into the commission of this great crime ‡. The European physician || who attended that monarch

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 339.

† Shah Tâmâsp was put to death by Rezâ Kooli in the manner Hanway mentions; but it has been conjectured that this act was committed by the command of Nâdir.

‡ Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 398.

|| The monk Bazin joined Nâdir Shah when he was at Derbund, in 1741, and remained with him as physician till 1747, the year in which that monarch was murdered.

CHAP. XVII.

during the latter years of his life, asserts the innocence of Rezâ Kooli. He adds, that Nâdir was so penetrated with remorse the moment that the deed of horror was done, that he vented his fury on all around him; and fifty noblemen, who had witnessed the dreadful act, were put to death, on the pretext that they should have offered their lives as sacrifices to save the eyes of a prince who was the glory of their country *. It is also to be remarked, that the impressions which have been transmitted regarding a fact comparatively recent, are all against Nâdir, who is believed to have had no evidence of his son's guilt but his own suspicions. From the moment that his life had been attempted in Mazenderan, that monarch had become gloomy and irritable. His bad success against the Lesghees had increased the natural violence of his temper; and, listening to the enemies of Rezâ Kooli †, he, in a moment of rage, ordered him to be blinded. "Your crimes have forced me to this dreadful measure," was, we are told, the speech that Nâdir made to his son. "It is not my eyes "you have put out," replied Rezâ Kooli, "but those of Persia ‡." The prophetic truth of this answer sunk deep into the soul of Nâdir; and we may believe his historian, who affirms that he never afterwards knew happiness, nor desired that others should enjoy it. All his future actions were deeds of horror, except the contest which he carried on against the Turks for three years; and even in it he displayed none of that energy and heroic spirit which marked his first wars with that nation.

* Lettres Edifiantes, Vol. IV. page 294.

† I have conversed with the descendants of several of Nâdir's chief omrahs, who all concurred in the truth of Meerza Mehdy's statement of this fact.

‡ Persian MSS.

CHAP. XVII.

A. D. 1744.
A. H. 1157.
Nâdir marches against the Turks.

The Persian army had made unsuccessful efforts to reduce the cities of Bussorah, of Bagdad, and of Moossul. Nâdir marched, early in the succeeding year, to meet a large Turkish force which had advanced to near Erivân: and we are told, that he desired to encounter his enemies in battle on the same plain where he had ten years before acquired such renown: but their general, subdued by his own fears, fled, and was massacred by his soldiers; who, thrown into confusion at this event, were easily routed by the Persians. This was the last victory of Nâdir*, and it was gained merely by the terror of his name. Sensible of his own condition, he hastened to make peace. His pretensions regarding the establishment of a fifth sect among orthodox Mahomedans, and the erection of a fifth pillar in the mosque at Mecca, were abandoned. It was agreed, that prisoners on both sides should be released; that Persian pilgrims going to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina should be protected; and that the whole of the provinces of Irak and Aderbijan should remain with Persia, except an inconsiderable territory, that had belonged to the Turkish government in the time of Shah Ismail, the first of the Suffavean kings.

A. D. 1745.
A. H. 1158.
The Turkish general massacred, and his army routed.

Terms on which he concludes a peace with the Turks

His barbarous conduct during the last five years of his reign.

The conduct of Nâdir to his own subjects during the last five years of his reign has been described, (even by a partial historian,) as exceeding in barbarity all that has been recorded of the most bloody tyrants†. The acquisition of the wealth of India had at first filled the mind of this monarch with the most generous and patriotic feelings. He had proclaimed that no taxes should be

* His son, Nasser-ûllah, defeated, about the same period, an army of the Turks near Diarbekir.

† Meerza Mehdy's History. Sir William Jones's Works, Vol. V. page 399.

collected from Persia for three years. But the possession of riches had soon its usual effect of creating a desire for more: and while the vast treasures he had acquired were hoarded at the Fort of Kelat, which, with all the fears of a despot, he continually laboured to render inaccessible, he not only paid his armies, but added to his golden heaps from the arrears of remitted revenue, which he extorted with the most inflexible rigour.

Nâdir knew that the attack which he had made upon the religion of his country had rendered him unpopular; and that the priests, whom he peculiarly oppressed, endeavoured to spread disaffection. This made him suspect those who still adhered to the tenets of the Sheah sect; or, in other words, almost all the natives of Persia. The troops in his army upon whom he placed most reliance were the Affghans and Tartars, who were of the Soonee persuasion. Their leaders were his principal favourites; and every pretext was taken to put to death such Persian chiefs as possessed either influence or power. These proceedings had the natural effect of producing rebellion in every quarter *, and the spirit of insurrection which now displayed itself among his subjects changed the violence of Nâdir into outrageous fury. His murders were no longer confined to individuals: the inhabitants of whole cities were massacred: and men, to use the words of his historian †, left their abodes, and took up their habitations in caverns and deserts, in the hope of escaping his savage ferocity. We are told ‡, and the events which preceded render the tale not improbable, that when on his march to subdue one of his nephews ‖ who had rebelled in Seistan, he proposed to put to death

* Fars, Shirwan, and Mazenderan, were all, at one period, in rebellion.

† Meerza Mehdy. ‡ Hanway, Vol. II. page 433. ‖ Aly Kooli Khan.

CHAP. XVII.

Proposes to put to death every Persian in his army.

His intention is known, and a plot is formed against him.

every Persian in his army. There can be little doubt that his mind was, at this moment, in a state of phrensy which amounted to insanity. Some of the principal officers of his court, who learnt that their names were in the list of proscribed victims*, resolved to save themselves by the assassination of Nâdir. The execution of the plot was committed to four persons, among whom was Mahomed Aly Khan, a chief of his own tribe of Affshâr, and Sâlâh Beg, the captain of his guards. These chiefs took advantage of their stations, and, under the pretext of urgent business, rushed past the guards into the inner tents, where the tyrant was asleep. The noise awoke him; and he had slain two of the meaner assassins, when a blow from Sâlâh Beg deprived him of existence.

He is murdered. A. D. 1747. A. H. 1160.

Review of the principal actions of the life of Nâdir Shah.

The character of this extraordinary man will be best understood from a short review of the principal actions of his life. Born in a low rank, he appears to have owed the distinction he early obtained among his rude associates to his uncommon bodily strength, his determined courage, and a strong natural sense, which, though afterwards improved by experience, was never cultivated by education. The wretched condition of his native country was calculated to excite in the ardent mind of Nâdir the most noble ambition: and when we reflect on the success which attended his first efforts against the Affghans, we are almost reconciled to his usurpation of the name of that sovereign power, the substance of which he had long enjoyed, and which he could not have resigned without

* The physician Bazin states, that Nâdir had informed the chief of the Affghans that he entirely reposed on the fidelity of his corps, and that he meant they should next day seize and imprison all the officers of his guards.—*Lettres Edifiantes*, Vol. IV. page 313.

extreme danger, both to himself, and to a nation which had been saved by his valour and his genius.

After expelling the barbarous invaders of his country from the central provinces of Persia, and after obtaining the most signal victories over the Turks, the next labour of Nâdir was to restore the throne to its former glory: and when he had conquered Candahar and Cabul, he sought (and with success) to add to the strength of the empire, by converting the most dangerous of her enemies into the bravest of her defenders. The causes of his expedition to India have been explained; and, though it brought misery to thousands, there, perhaps, never was a conquest of such magnitude made by an Asiatic prince, with less crime to the individual by whom it was accomplished. The riches and the renown which he obtained by this enterprise, gave him great means of restoring Persia to all her ancient splendour; and his invasion of the territories of Bokharah, while it was the best, and indeed the only way in which he could secure the continued tranquillity of his own possessions, added, perhaps, still more to his fame and to his power. His generous treatment of the humbled monarch of that country, and his conduct to the Emperor of India, showed that Nâdir desired to trust more to the impression of his arms, than to the extent of his dominions, for the future security of his power.

Hitherto this monarch, whether we consider the noble and patriotic object which first stimulated his ambition, the valour and ability he displayed, the comparative moderation with which he used success, or the glorious deeds he had done, is entitled to great, if not unqualified admiration. The dreadful change which took place in his disposition and character, has been stated. From the moment

that his mind was subdued by avarice and suspicion, he became one of the most cruel of tyrants: and Persia, by a strange destiny, seemed doomed to receive her death from that hand, to which she, a few years before, had owed her existence.

When the mind of Nâdir was in its most disturbed and phrensied state, he still continued to brood over those plans which he had cherished in his happier days. He anxiously desired to encourage trade; and thought that his country would not only become more wealthy, but more powerful, if he could form a navy. The aid of an enterprising, but indiscreet Englishman*, enabled him to commence the execution of this project on the Caspian; but the effort produced no benefit to Persia; and, by exciting the jealousy of Russia, proved destructive to an infant branch of commerce, which British merchants had established in that quarter. Nâdir had also ordered ships to be built on the shores of the Persian Gulf; and, with the true spirit of an unreflecting despot, commanded that timber for that purpose should be conveyed from the forests of Mazenderan, a distance of more than six hundred miles, and that through a country which had neither canals, roads, nor wheel carriages. The oppressed inhabitants of the intervening provinces were compelled to contribute their labour to this object, which was never accomplished. The rude ribs of an ill-constructed vessel were ten years ago to be seen on the beach at Abusheher, and seemed as if spared to be the emblem of the folly of this attempt †.

* The name of this person was Ellon: for an account of his proceedings, and their consequences, see the Works of Jonas Hanway.

† He also directed an immense quantity of marble to be carried from Aderbijan, to ornament his palaces at Kelat and Mushed; the transportation of which, caused almost

We have a remarkable instance of the anxiety with which Nâdir desired to encourage commerce, in the conduct he observed towards our countryman, Hanway, who visited his camp three years before his death, and at a period when Persia was devastated by his oppression and cruelty. The monarch commanded that all the losses which this eminent merchant had sustained by the rebellion at Asterabad, should be made good, either by the recovery of his merchandise*, or from the sale of the property of those by whom he had been plundered.

as much misery as the conveying of the timber did. In 1810 I visited the quarry where this marble was found, and saw a great number of half-finished blocks, that had lain untouched since his death. This quarry is on the banks of the Lake of Oormia, and about eighteen miles from the Town of Maragha.

* A Persian MS. in my possession relates an extraordinary and amusing anecdote of Nâdir at this period, which shows how completely he understood the feelings of the most ignorant and the wickedest of his subjects. A native merchant, travelling from Cabul, had been robbed in a plain near Nishapore, and carried his complaint to the sovereign. "Was there no one near but the robbers?" said Nâdir. "None," was the reply. "Were there no trees, or stones, or bushes?" "Yes," said the man, "there was one large solitary tree, under whose shade I "was reposing when I was attacked." Nâdir, on hearing this, affected great fury, and ordered two executioners to proceed instantly, and flog the tree that had been described, every morning, till it either restored the property that had been lost, or revealed the names of the thieves by whom it had been taken. The mandate of a king of Persia is always a law; that of Nâdir was considered as irrevocable as fate. The executioners proceeded; and the tree had not suffered flagelation above a week, when all the goods that had been stolen were found one morning carefully deposited at its root. The alarmed robbers, who soon heard of the extravagant cruelty that inflicted such blows upon an inanimate substance, trembled at the very thought of the horrible punishment that awaited them if ever discovered. When the result was reported to Nâdir, he smiled, and said, "I knew what the flogging of "that tree would produce."

CHAP. XVII.

It has been already stated, that Nâdir desired to change the religion of his country. His first idea probably was to destroy, with the tenets of the Sheah sect, that devoted veneration and attachment which those who held them cherished for the Suffavean dynasty, by whom this faith had first been established as a national religion. He also desired, as has been noticed, to do away religious distinctions, which seemed likely to interfere with his schemes of ambition. We have the strongest evidence to conclude, that his conduct on this point was wholly uninfluenced by other motives than those of policy. He appears, indeed, to have had no fixed sentiments upon the subject of religion.

Soon after his return from India, he had directed that the four Evangelists should be translated into Persian; and when this work was finished in a very incorrect manner by some Romish and Armenian priests, who wrote it under the superintendance of his secretary*, he summoned some Christian priests, Jewish rabbies, and Mahomedan moollahs, to his presence†. Extracts from the imperfect translation that had been made of the New Testament were read to him, and he amused himself, and some of his hearers, with ludicrous remarks on the mysterious parts of the Christian faith. The tenets of the Jews, and the traditions of the Mahomedans, were treated with the same freedom: and the tyrant broke up this assembly of divines with a declaration, that, if God spared him, he would make a religion, much better than any of those that mankind yet possessed.

* Meerza Mehdy, who was also the author of his history. Hanway tells us, that this translation, which was made in six months, was dressed up with glosses and fables to make it agree with the koran.

† May, 1741. Hanway, Vol. II. page 404.

The Suffavean kings had established a powerful hierarchy in their dominions, at the head of which was a Sudder-ul-Suddoor, or chief pontiff. This body, who were always possessed of much wealth, had enjoyed not only a very great share of the government, but of the revenues of the country, under the weak and bigoted Shah Sultan Hussein. The fate of that prince had brought the popular indignation on every measure with which his memory was associated; and Nâdir, therefore, proceeded, without alarm at the consequence, to plunder the ecclesiastical revenues. We are informed *, that immediately after he was crowned, he assembled a number of the principal priests, and demanded of them in what manner the immense revenues † which they enjoyed was appropriated. They replied, "In supporting priests, colleges, and mosques. In the latter," they added, "we continually offer up prayers to God for the success of "our sovereigns."—"Your prayers," said Nâdir, "are evidently "not acceptable to the Almighty, for the empire has suffered its "greatest decline when your order was most encouraged. It has "been rescued from destruction by my brave soldiers, who are, "therefore, to be deemed God's chosen instruments, and your "wealth must henceforward be applied for their support."

At the same time that Nâdir seized almost the whole of the church revenue, he abolished the duties of the chief pontiff, but left the name, and gave the person who bore it a small pension. His conduct to the priesthood, though it excited no commotion at the moment, was, perhaps, one of the most impolitic acts that he ever

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 343.

† Hanway calculates this amount at nearly one fifth of the revenue of the country, or about a million sterling.

CHAP. XVII. committed. This order became the active disseminators of sedition: and, as those feelings of envy which their wealth had excited were soon changed into pity for their fallen condition, the efforts they made were very successful. Nâdir was well aware of their sentiments. We are told *, that on sending one of his nobles to take charge of a distant government, he concluded his instructions by saying, " Remember you are not to communicate with the " moollah: but I know you will meet him at night, and talk of " me. He will call me one of the greatest monarchs in the universe; " but will add, that I am a villain, and that I have neither mercy " nor justice in my composition."

The contempt in which Nâdir held the arts by which the dervishes, and other religious mendicants, imposed upon the credulity of his countrymen, was shown on every occasion. Many of these believed that the holy Imaum Rezâ, who is interred at Mushed, continued to work miracles; and this belief gave rise to a number of impositions. Persons, pretending to be blind, went to his tomb; and, after a long period of prayer, opened their eyes, and declared that their sight had been restored by the holy Imaum. One of these was seated at the gate of the sacred mausoleum when Nâdir passed †. " How long " have you been blind?" said the monarch. " Two years," answered the man. " A proof," replied Nâdir, " that you have no faith. If " you had been a true believer you would have been cured long ago. " Recollect, my friend, if I come back and find you as you now are, " I will strike your head off." When Nâdir returned, the frightened fellow pretended to pray violently, and all at once found his sight.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 446.

† Persian MSS.

" A miracle! a miracle!" the populace exclaimed, and tore off his coat in small pieces, as relics. The monarch smiled, and observed, " that faith was every thing."

Nâdir, we are informed, was a predestinarian; and the Persians believe, that even in his phrensied moments, when he was destroying his fellow-creatures, he thought himself an instrument of Heaven. As a proof of this, they relate the following extraordinary occurrence *. An arrow was shot into his quarters with a paper affixed, on which was written, " If thou art a king, cherish and protect thy " people; if a prophet, show us the path of salvation; if a god, be " merciful to thy creatures." The tyrant, while he made every search for the author, commanded that copies of this paper should be distributed throughout the camp, with the following answer annexed to it. " I am neither a king, to protect my subjects; a prophet, to " teach the way of salvation; nor a god, to exercise the attribute of " mercy: but I am he, whom the Almighty has sent in his wrath, to " chastise a world of sinners †."

The character of this wonderful man is, perhaps, exhibited in its truest colours in those impressions which the memory of his actions has left upon the minds of his countrymen. They speak of him as a deliverer and a destroyer: but while they expatiate with pride upon his deeds of glory, they dwell with more pity than horror upon the cruel enormities which disgraced the latter years of his reign; and neither his crimes, nor the attempt he made to abolish their religion, have subdued their gratitude and veneration for the hero, who revived in the breasts of his degraded countrymen a

* Persian MSS. † Hanway also relates this occurrence. Vol. II. page 442.

CHAP. XVII. sense of their former fame, and restored Persia to her independence as a nation.

A. D. 1747. A. H. 1160. Ahmed Khan is repulsed in an attack on the Persians. Proceeds to Candahar, and founds a separate kingdom.

The morning after the murder of Nâdir presented a scene of the greatest confusion. Ahmed Khan *, a chief of the Abdâllee tribe of Affghans, supported by a corps of Usbegs, made an attack upon the Persian troops, but was repulsed. He left the army; and proceeding by rapid marches to Candahar, not only obtained possession of that city, but took a large convoy of treasure which was coming from Cabul and Scind to the Persian camp. By the aid of these means this leader laid the foundation of a kingdom, which soon attained a strength that rendered it formidable to surrounding nations. The chiefs who had murdered Nâdir agreed to place his nephew Aly, who was at the head of a force in Seistan, upon the vacant throne.

Aly is hailed as sovereign of Persia.

This prince hastened to join them; and he was hailed as sovereign of Persia the moment he arrived. His first act was to circulate a proclamation †, in which he declared, that those who had slain his uncle had acted by his order. This extraordinary document, which was meant to screen the conspirators from danger, deserves our attention, as it affords us, in the most authentic form, a proof of the impressions which had been made on all ranks by the horrid cruelties of Nâdir. We discover from it, that a favourite nephew of that monarch, who owed every thing to his bounty, makes an appeal to the inhabitants of Persia to support him on the throne, on the

* According to some authors, Ahmed Khan was attacked by the Persians.

† All Persians agree in their account of the causes that led to the death of Nâdir; and there is no doubt this declaration of Aly's was only meant to screen the murderers from future imputation and danger on that account.

ground of his merit in having destroyed a despot; who, to use the words of the proclamation, "delighted in blood; and, with unheard-of "barbarity, made pyramids of the heads of his own subjects." "We "commanded," this prince observes, "that Mahomed Kooli Khan "should prevail upon the Affshâr guards to seize and remove the "tyrant. Thus performing a service highly beneficial to the public "welfare, and restoring rest and tranquillity to the nation*."

Marches to Mushed.

The same proclamation informed his subjects that Aly had marched to Mushed, where he had listened to the unanimous voice of the principal officers of the army, and the inhabitants of the city, who entreated him to ascend the throne, "that he might relieve the "miseries, and repair the desolations of his country." He concluded by stating, that a consideration of the dreadful extortions and cruelties of his predecessor, and a desire to appease the wrath of Heaven, led him to remit the revenues of the current year, and all extraordinary taxes for the two following.

Assumes the title of Adil Shah.

While Aly, who took the name of Adil Shah, or "the just king," was, by his professions, endeavouring to obtain popularity, his acts were of a nature that showed he was at once weak and cruel. A party of his troops had succeeded in taking, by surprise, the Fortress of Kelat, which contained all the treasures of Nâdir. The princes, Nasser-ûllah, Imaum Kooli, and Shah Rokh, were at Kelat when Aly's troops entered. They fled, but were pursued and taken. The two former were put to death, as were also the unfortunate Reza Kooli, and thirteen of the sons and grandsons of Nâdir. The only descendant of the conqueror that was spared, was his grandson Shah Rokh, who was fourteen years of age when these horrid scenes

His troops take the Fortress of Kelat.

* Hanway, Vol. II. page 451.

CHAP. XVII. occurred. We are informed, that the life of this young prince was only meant to be preserved till Adil Shah was confirmed in the power he had usurped. It is also asserted that the cruel tyrant was withheld from destroying him, from a fear that the clamours of the people might demand as their ruler a prince of the blood of Nâdir; and in this extreme he proposed elevating Shah Rokh to the throne, and continuing to rule Persia in his name.

Adil Shah endeavoured to efface the impression made by his cruelty and his usurpation by dispensing, with a prodigal hand, the vast wealth which had been accumulated by his uncle: but even this attached none to his interests, and his reign was short and inglorious*.

Adil Shah is taken, and deprived of sight. A. D. 1748. A. H. 1162.

He was defeated, taken, and deprived of sight, by his brother, Ibrahim Khan, to whom he had intrusted the government of Irak. That chief did not at first declare his intention of aspiring to the throne. Aware that the young prince, Shah Rokh, was supported by several powerful nobles, he endeavoured to obtain possession of his person, and the royal treasures, before he disclosed his views. He, however, failed in this plan: and when he found he had no other resource except a bold and open attempt, he proclaimed himself king: but his reign was still shorter than that of his brother, whom he had dethroned†. He was made prisoner by his own troops, and fell, unregretted, by the hand of the officer who was appointed

Ibrahim Khan proclaims himself king.

Is put to death

* Mahomed Kooli Khan, who was the chief actor in the conspiracy against Nâdir, incurred the displeasure of Adil Shah. He was seized, and given over bound to the ladies of the murdered conqueror, who fell upon him and cut him to pieces.

† His victory over his brother was gained by the defection of Aly's army. He, however, conquered Ameer Arslan, an ambitious governor, who had made himself independant of Aderbijan.

CHAP. XVII.

to guard him to Mushed. Adil Shah was also sent prisoner to that city, where he was put to death.

Adil Shah is also slain.

Reign of Shah Rokh.

Shah Rokh was the son of Rezâ Kooli, with whose misfortunes it had become customary to associate those of Persia. His mother was the daughter of Shah Sultan Hussein; and he had therefore, from his descent, every claim to the throne he now filled. He was also popular, on account of his youth, his personal beauty, his amiable manners, and humane character. But all these fair hopes were blasted by the art and ambition of an enemy, who, encouraged by the general confusion of the times, sought to obtain the crown by the destruction of the prince in whose favour all voices appeared to be united. The name of this person was Meerza Syud Mahomed. He had been employed in stations of some distinction under Nâdir Shah, and boasted of being descended, through a female branch, from one of the Suffavean monarchs*. Syud Mahomed commenced his machinations by circulating a report, that the mild Shah Rokh inherited all the rancour of Nâdir against the religion of his country: and he brought forward the kindness and generosity with which the young monarch had treated persons of other religions, particularly Christian merchants, as a proof of the truth of this allegation. This man was the son of a chief priest† of Mushed; and the high reputation his father had enjoyed, gave him so great an influence with the whole of that order, that they combined to favour his views. Encouraged by their support, he collected a body of followers, and

A. D. 1748.
A. H. 1162.
Syud Mahomed endeavours to obtain the crown.

* His mother was the daughter of Solimân the Second, the father of Shah Sultan Hussein.

† Meerza Dâood; a man of such celebrated piety, that Shah Sultan Hussein had not disdained to give him his sister in marriage.

CHAP. XVII.

Shah Rokh is taken, and deprived of sight.

Syud Mahomed proclaims himself king, and assumes the name of Solimân.

A. D. 1750.

A. H. 1164.

Is put to death.

Shah Rokh is restored to the throne.

He is imprisoned.

attacked Shah Rokh before he could assemble his troops. The young prince was made prisoner and instantly deprived of sight; while his cruel enemy was proclaimed King of Persia, under the name of Solimân: but his enjoyment of power was short. Yusoof Aly, the principal general of Shah Rokh's army, hastened to revenge his monarch. Solimân was defeated, taken, and put to death, as a just punishment for his inhuman barbarity.

Yusoof Aly, after this victory, restored the blind Shah Rokh to the throne, and assumed the name of regent. But these measures were opposed by two chiefs*, one the head of a Kurdish, and the other of an Arabian tribe, by whose combined forces he was overcome and slain. Shah Rokh, who seemed born to be the sport of fortune, was again sent from his throne to a prison. His enemies, however, a few days after they had dethroned him, quarrelled with each other, marched out of separate gates of the city, and came to action. Meer Aulum, the chief of the Arabians, triumphed, but only to fall in his turn before Ahmed Khan Abdâllee. This leader has been already mentioned. Immediately after the death of Nâdir he had proclaimed himself King of the Affghans, and had just added to his other conquests that of the City of Herat. He now advanced against Meer Aulum, who was defeated and slain; and the City of Mushed, after some resistance, submitted to the conqueror.

Ahmed Khan was at this period in a condition to attempt the reduction of all Persia: but the prospect was not inviting. Every province of that kingdom was exhausted. The Affghans were still deemed the original authors of the misery that its inhabitants

* One of these was Jaaffer, who commanded a large body of Kurds; and the other Meer Aulum, who was the chief of a tribe of Arabs.—*Persian MSS.*

endured; and the unsuccessful attempt which had been made to alter the religion of the country, had revived, in all their vigour, those sentiments of hatred which the Persians entertained for that race as Soonees. In addition to these obstacles, the example of usurpation, which Nâdir Shah had given, had inspired every governor of a province, and every chief of a tribe, with the desire of rule; and Persia abounded with pretenders to regal power. A. D. 1751. A. H. 1165. Under such circumstances, we must admire that wisdom which led the Affghan prince to withdraw from this scene of turbulence, that he might exclusively direct his future exertions to the nobler and more legitimate object of establishing a power in his native country; which, while it gave a crown to his descendants, raised his nation to a rank and consideration far beyond what they had ever enjoyed.

Before Ahmed Khan left Khorassan, he assembled the principal chiefs, and proposed that the province which gave birth to Nâdir should be separated from Persia, and converted into a principality for his unfortunate grandson*. They all agreed, and promised continued allegiance; cherishing, no doubt, an expectation, that an arrangement which placed a blind and inefficient prince at their head, was the most favourable for their individual views of aggrandizement. Ahmed became the guarantee of the independence of Khorassan, which, he justly concluded, would hereafter form a strong barrier to guard his dominions from the ambition of whatever ruler might succeed in obtaining the Crown of Persia.

* Persian MSS.

CHAP. XVII.

Shah Rokh restored by Ahmed Khan.

The blind Shah Rokh continued, as was designed, to enjoy the name of a prince; and his petty court was supported by the revenues of the City of Mushed, and its immediate environs. He also received annual offerings from some chiefs, who continued to acknowledge him as their nominal superior. The few and unimportant events of the life of this prince and his family, will find their place in the history of those rulers who rose to power amid the scenes of violence and distraction in which the empire was involved immediately after the death of Nâdir.

Engraved by C. Heath.

KURREEM KHAN.

From an Original Persian Painting.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAPTER XVIII.

Reign of Kurreem Khan, Zund.

THE History of Persia, from the death of Nâdir Shah till the elevation of Aga Mahomed Khan, the founder of the reigning family, though it occupies nearly half a century, presents to our attention no one striking feature, except the life of Kurreem Khan, Zund*. The happy reign of this excellent prince, as contrasted with those who preceded and followed him, affords to the historian of Persia that description of mixed pleasure and repose which a traveller enjoys, who arrives at a beautiful and fertile valley, in the midst of an arduous journey over barren and rugged wastes. It is pleasing to recount the actions of a chief, who, though born in an inferior rank, obtained power without crime, and who exercised it with a moderation that was, in the times in which he lived, as singular as his humanity and justice. CHAP. XVIII

When Ahmed Khan was employed in settling the province of Khorassan, Mahomed Hussein Khan, chief of the tribe of Kujurs, (and grandfather to the present King of Persia,) had established himself at Asterabad; a town situated on the eastern shores of the Caspian, which had long been the residence of his family: and the

* Zund was the name of his tribe, or clan.

CHAP. XVIII. whole of Mazenderan had submitted to his authority. The father* of this chief had been murdered by Nâdir Shah; and the tribe of Kujurs cherished, in consequence, a blood feud against the descendants of that monarch. Ahmed Khan, fearing that the future enterprise of Mahomed Hussein Khan might disturb his arrangements, sent a corps of his Affghans to attack Mazenderan: but they were repulsed with considerable loss: and the fame and strength of the chief of the Kujurs were greatly increased by this victory.

The province of Aderbijan was, at this period, under the rule of an Affghan leader†. Ghilan had declared itself independent under one of its own chiefs‡: and Georgia, governed by a Christian prince of the name of Heraclius, who had learned the art of war under Nâdir, had assumed an attitude which induced many to believe that principality would emancipate itself from the degraded subjection in which it had been so long held by the Mahomedan princes of Asia.

Such was the state of all the northern parts of the empire, when a chief of the tribe of Bukhteeâree, called Aly Murdân Khan, took possession of Isfahan ||, and determined to raise a pageant of the House of Suffee to the throne, in order that he might reconcile the inhabitants of that capital to his own usurpation of regal power. As he was well satisfied he could not effect this object without great aid,

* Futteh Aly Khan, whose death and its cause have been noticed in the Life of Nâdir Shah.

† Azâd Khan, who was one of the generals of Nâdir Shah. ‡ Hidâyet Khan.

|| He attacked and defeated Abool Futteh Khan, who was governor of the city on the part of Shah Rokh: but he appears to have afterwards contracted some engagements with this chief, as we find him continued for a period in his station of governor. — *Tuarikh Zundeah*, by Meerza Saaduck.

Kurreem Khan is invited to join the standard of Aly Murdân Khan.

A. D. 1750. A. H. 1164.

he invited several omrahs to join his standard. The principal of those was Kurreem Khan, of the tribe of Zund. This chief was not of high birth*, and had obtained no command in the army of Nâdir; but he was distinguished for his good sense and courage. We are told by the historian of his reign, that Kurreem Khan from the first enjoyed an equal rank with Aly Murdân: and that when it was agreed to raise a young prince† of the race of Suffee to the throne, it was settled that one of the chiefs should be appointed his minister, and that the other should command the army. But it appears, from other authorities, that Kurreem did not consider himself on a level with Aly Murdân Khan. There is, indeed, ground to conclude, that his ambition was, at the commencement of the connexion, limited to the prospect of succeeding that leader, who was very old and had no children.

When the forces of these chiefs occupied Isfahan, that city was distracted by a number of parties. Every pretender to the throne had his adherents in the capital: but the inhabitants were soon reconciled to the new government. The troops of Aly Murdân Khan had at first committed some excesses, but no blood was shed: and that omrah, though stern and severe in his manner, was neither cruel nor unjust ‡. His fame, however, was soon eclipsed by that of Kurreem, who, when they took possession of Isfahan, defended the

* In a genealogical account of his family, written by one of his immediate descendants, Kurreem Khan is stated to have been the son of a celebrated freebooter of the name of Eymâck: but there is no attempt to trace his descent further.

† This pageant was the son of the sister of Shah Sultan Hussein: he was between eight and nine years old, and was crowned under the name of Shah Ismail.

‡ Persian MSS.

CHAP. XVIII. inhabitants of Julfâ, which was the quarter where he commanded, from the slightest injury either to their persons or property. His conduct was more remarkable, as almost all those he protected were Christians: but Kurreem thought more of their condition than their religion, and displayed, on this occasion, all that moderation and humanity which distinguished his character. He was rewarded with the warmest gratitude of those he saved from pillage. His soldiers even respected the principles of their leader; and the eyes of all were directed with admiration and astonishment to a chief of a barbarous tribe who refrained from plunder, and showed, amid scenes of violence and confusion, so marked a love of order and of justice.

Kurreem Khan protects the inhabitants of Julfâ.

The conduct of Kurreem obtained him a popularity which excited the jealousy of Aly Murdân Khan; and a short period brought these chiefs to an open rupture. Aly Murdân Khan had taken advantage of Kurreem's absence to oppress the inhabitants of Julfâ, and afterwards publickly reproved that leader for the vehemence with which he expressed his sentiments on this occasion. He had also put to death the Governor of Isfahan*; and it was obvious to all, that Kurreem would be the next victim of his suspicion and resentment. That chief, aware of the danger of his situation, and preferring a state of open hostility to such friendship, took the field with his followers, and declared himself the enemy of Aly Murdân, who, after a short contest of various fortune, was assassinated by a noble of the name of Mahomed Khan†, and his death left his rival the undis-

Aly Murdân Khan oppresses them.

And puts the Governor of Isfahan to death.
A. D. 1751.
A. H. 1165.

Aly Murdân Khan is assassinated.
A. D. 1753.
A. H. 1163.

* Abool Futteh Khan.

† It is stated by some authors, that this chief was a relation of Kurreem Khan, and that he deserted the standard of that ruler, and joined Aly Murdân Khan for the

puted possession of the southern provinces of Persia: but Kurreem had still to contend (before he could expect to preserve those territories in peace,) with many and powerful enemies. Before we proceed to a narration of the wars in which he was engaged, it will be useful to take a view of the character of those means and impressions to which he trusted for success, and to which he ultimately owed that complete triumph with which his efforts were crowned.

Character of the population of Persia at the commencement of Kurreem Khan's efforts to gain the empire.

The inhabitants of Persia may be divided into four great classes. The first, and most powerful if united, are the native tribes of that nation, who continue to live in tents*, and change their residence with the season. The great mass of this part of the population, whose habits are pastoral and military †, are to be found along those ranges of hilly countries which, commencing near the entrance of the Persian Gulf, stretch, parallel with its shores, to Shuster, and from thence, taking a north-western direction, extend up the left bank of the Tigris, as high as the province of Armenia. The region that has been described includes Kerman, almost all Fars, a part of Irak, and the whole of Kurdistan. The inhabitants of these countries are divided into many different tribes; but there cannot be a stronger proof of their coming from one stock, than that the languages which they speak are all rude dialects of the Pehlivi. There is a considerable difference in these dialects, but not so much as to prevent the inhabitants of one province understanding that of another. From the period of the introduction of the religion of Mahomed,

express purpose of perpetrating this crime. — *Tuarikh Zundeâh*, by MEERZA SAADUCK.

* In the northern parts of Persia, where the climate is very severe, they inhabit hovels in winter.

† Some of them are also settled in Mazenderan.

CHAP. XVIII there never had been a king of Persia of this race. That country had either been governed by monarchs of a Tartar or an Arabian family. The numerous tribes of native Persians had, consequently, always been regarded with apprehension; and a jealous policy had sought, by transplanting them to distant quarters of the empire, and by fomenting internal divisions, to weaken their strength: but the great balance to their power were the Tartar, Turkish, or Turkoman tribes*, who had, at different periods, accompanied conquerors from beyond the Oxus, from the banks of the Volga, and from the plains of Syria, into the kingdom of Persia. The usages of these tribes in all that related to their rude habitations, their mode of life, and of warfare, were the same as the others; but they had continued distinct, from the difference of their language; and that circumstance alone (had other motives been wanting) would have kept alive a spirit of rivalry and hatred in the minds of these two great classes of the military population of Persia. The Turkish tribes, though not so numerous as the Persians, were more powerful, because more united, and more wealthy. They had, through all the revolutions of that kingdom, been kept more concentrated, as they formed, from the period of the conquest of Toghrul Beg, till that of Abbas the Great, the force on which the different races of monarchs chiefly depended.

The citizens and cultivators of Persia were not warlike; though the former had, on many occasions, by their gallant defence of their lives and property, acquired a high reputation for valour.

* There can hardly be said to be any distinction in these names, which are indiscriminately used by Persian historians to describe those tribes in Persia who derive their origin from Tartary, or Turkistan, and who speak the Turkish language.

Almost all the towns and villages were walled; and in a country where the science of attack was but little known, the efforts of the inhabitants (part of whom were always a militia,) in repelling attack were often successful; and, consequently, though this part of the population seldom furnished many recruits to an army, their attachment was, in scenes of civil warfare, of great consequence to the chief whose cause they espoused.

The fourth class of the inhabitants of Persia consisted of a number of tribes of Arabians, who entirely occupied the level country between the mountains and the shore of the Persian Gulf. This tract, which resembles, as has been before stated *, the peninsula of Arabia more than any of the interior provinces of Persia, had been long abandoned to this race, who had, from the most early ages, possessed a superiority over the Persians at sea. The latter indeed seem, at all periods of their history, to have at once dreaded and abhorred that element. The Arabs had consequently not only possessed themselves of the Islands of the Gulf, but of almost all the harbours along the coast. Their children had maintained these possessions, yielding at times a real, and at others a nominal, obedience to the government of Persia: but their poverty, the heat of the climate, and the barrenness of the soil of the countries they inhabited, combined with the facility with which those tribes who dwelt near the coast could embark in their boats, have at all periods aided the efforts made by this race to maintain themselves in a state of rude independence.

Such was the character of that population over which Kurreem Khan desired to establish his government. He was chief of a small

* Vide Vol. I. page 2.

CHAP. XVIII.

Kurreem Khan summons the native tribes of Persia to join his standard.

tribe, who, though described as a branch of that of the Lac, claimed a high rank among the native tribes of his country*. He summoned to his standard the whole of this class, and urged them to union and exertion, that they might no more be deemed a conquered people, but resume that pre-eminence to which they had a right from their numbers, their valour, and their glorious descent from the ancient heroes of Persia. The inhabitants of the principal cities of the empire showed, from the first, their partiality to Kurreem, which was grounded on the confidence they reposed in his humanity and justice. The Arabians, who had continued to preserve the habits of their nation, admired the simplicity and manliness of his character; and even those enemies, against whom he had chiefly to contend, the Affghan† and Turkish tribes, who fought under the banners of his rivals for power, considered Kurreem Khan with respect, and placed an implicit reliance not only in his pledged faith, but on the generosity of his disposition, and the probity of his mind.

Kurreem Khan had, after the death of Aly Murdân Khan, two formidable rivals‡, whom it was necessary that he should subdue before his power could be firmly established. It will prevent confusion to give a distinct account of his contest with each of these chiefs. In the first action he had with Azâd Khan Affghan, the ruler of Aderbijan, which was fought near Kazveen, he was so completely defeated,

His first action with Azâd Khan. A. D. 1752. A. H. 1166.

* Some authors assert, that this tribe received the name of Zund from being charged, by Zoroaster, with the care of the Zund-a-vesta, or scripture of that prophet.

† The Affghans were mere temporary invaders, and cannot, therefore, be deemed as one of the classes of the population of Persia.

‡ Azâd Khan Affghan, and Mahomed Aly Khan Kujur.

that he was compelled not only to abandon Isfahan, but also Shiraz. Continuing his retreat, he entered those great ranges of mountains which divide the elevated and fertile valleys of Fars from the arid country that lies between their base and the shores of the Persian Gulf, and which is emphatically termed the Province of Gurmâseer, or the region of heat*. We are informed, that Kurreem, discouraged by his reverses and the desertion of a number of his followers, had, at this period, some thoughts of seeking that repose, which, with all his ambition, he loved, by flying to India: but if ever he indulged so unworthy a resolution, he was diverted from it by the remonstrances of Roostum Sultan, the chief of Khisht, a village situated in a small valley that lies near the top of one of those mountains which immediately overlook the Gurmâseer. That gallant soldier represented how easy it would be to defeat the army of Azâd Khan when they were entangled in a difficult pass, that they must march through before they reached Khisht. Roostum Sultan did more than give advice, he offered to attack the enemy with his mountaineers, and was successful in persuading Kurreem Khan to await the result of an action.

CHAP. XVIII.

Is compelled to abandon Isfahan and Shiraz.

A. D. 1753.
A. H. 1167.

Roostum Sultan remonstrates against his flying to India.

The pass of Kumâridge is in extent about two miles. The road, or rather path, which winds along the edge of the mountain, is very narrow, (in some places not more than two feet wide,) and can, consequently, only admit of troops marching in single files. The surface over which this difficult road has been made is hard rock; but there are a number of small hills in its vicinity, on which there are neither rocks nor vegetation. These appear to be formed of different strata of pebbles and loose earth. They are very steep,

Description of the pass of Kumâridge.

* Tuarikh Zundeâh.

CHAP. XVIII.

and rise in clusters of low and high peaks, some of which approach the road within a distance of less than a hundred yards. It was in the peaks of these hills, and the most inaccessible parts of the mountain, that Roostum Sultan posted his men, while Kurreem Khan waited for the enemy in the valley below*. The troops of Azâd Khan were permitted to enter the pass before the attack commenced. When it did, the confusion was instant and irremediable. They were entirely exposed to the mountaineers, who took aim at them with all that coolness which is inspired by security. Those who rushed forward were met and destroyed, before they could form in any numbers, by the body near Khisht, under Kurreem Khan. All who remained for any time in the pass were killed: but retreat was for a long time impossible, as those in the rear, when the action commenced, rushed forward to the support of their comrades. A few brave men, rendered desperate by their situation, made an attempt to reach their enemies, but they only hastened their own destruction. The victory was complete: and Kurreem Khan, attended by the chief of Khisht, and reinforced by several tribes of Arabians, pursued the fugitives, and once more occupied the City of Shiraz, where he employed himself in recruiting his army. He had no further contest with Azâd Khan†, who was soon afterwards

Defeat of the army of Azâd Khan. A. D. 1753. A. H. 1167.

Kurreem Khan reoccupies the City of Shiraz.

* I have been twice over the ground where this action was fought. When I visited it in 1800, I was accompanied by the grandson of Roostum Sultan, and there were several old men with him who had fought in the battle, and who pointed out every spot they had occupied. I became afterwards acquainted with Zâl Khan, the son of Roostum Sultan, who recited to me, with feelings of just pride, the particulars of this action.

† The army of this chief, though only in part composed of his countrymen, was still called the Affghan army; and the great hatred which the inhabitants of the southern

compelled, by the result of a contest into which he entered with Mahomed Hussein Khan, to fly to Bagdad: but the ruler of that city, though he granted him protection, refused to aid him in an effort he was desirous of making to recover his possessions. He next endeavoured to engage the Georgian prince, Heraclius, in his cause, but with no better success. Wearied of a wandering life, he at last threw himself upon the clemency of Kurreem Khan*, who received him with kindness, promoted him to the first rank among his nobles, and treated him with so generous a confidence, that he soon converted this dangerous rival into an attached friend.

Azâd Khan throws himself on his clemency.

The most powerful of all the enemies of Kurreem Khan was Mahomed Hussein Khan, the chief of the Kujurs. The Turkish tribe of Kujur had been long settled in Syria. They were brought from that country to Persia by Timour, and were one of the seven tribes who combined to raise Shah Ismail, the first king of the Suffavean race, to the throne of Persia†. We must conclude that this tribe were both numerous and brave, from the division that was made of them by Abbas the Great into three branches; one of which he stationed at Gunjah, in Georgia, that they might check the incursions of the Lesghees‡; another was planted at Merv, the ancient

An account of Mahomed Hussein Khan Kujur.

parts of Persia entertained against a ruler of that nation, no doubt operated, at this moment, in favour of Kurreem Khan.

* It is stated, that Kurreem demanded from Heraclius to deliver up Azâd Khan, but that was an act of which the Georgian prince was incapable. He, however, when he refused the Affghan chief his support, is supposed to have recommended him to throw himself upon the clemency of Kurreem.

† Persian MSS.

‡ The Lesghees inhabit the mountains between Georgia and the Caspian, and who are alike remarkable for their valour and turbulence. They are now subject to Russia.

CHAP. XVIII. capital of Margiana, which, from its situation on the frontier of Khorassan, had been always deemed the principal defence of that province against the incursions of the Usbegs: and the third was settled at Asterabad*, a small province, bordering on the country of those Turkoman tribes who dwell along the eastern shores of the Caspian, and who, defended from subjugation by their deserts and their courage, subsist by making constant predatory inroads into Persia. The first of these branches, which was settled at Gunjah, attached themselves to the fortunes of Nâdir Shah; and, in compliment to him, took the name of Kujur Affshâr†. They declined from the death of that monarch. The second‡ continued, surrounded by enemies, to hold possession of the City of Merv; while the chiefs of the third now openly aspired to the throne of Persia, which they would, even at this period, have attained, had they not been distracted and weakened by domestic feuds. This branch of the Kujurs is divided into two great families, or clans||; one termed the higher, and the other the lower. The chiefs of the former had

* "The small province of Asterabad is sometimes included in Mazenderan, which "it resembles in appearance, climate, and productions. This is the ancient Hyrcania, "and the paternal estate of the present King of Persia, as chief of the Kujur tribe, who "have entire possession of the province. It is bounded on the west by the Caspian "Sea; to the south it is separated by a lofty ridge of mountains from the districts of "Dâmghân and Bistan; it extends to the east as far as the longitude of 58°, and is "divided from Dâghestan by the River Ashor. The City of Asterabad, the capital of "this province, is situated near the mouth of the River Ester, on a bay of the Caspian "Sea."—KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia*, page 168.

† Nâdir, as has been before stated, was of the tribe of Affshâr.

‡ The name of this tribe of Kujurs is Azdânloo.

|| The Turkish names of these families are *Youkhâree-bâsh* and *Ashâkâ-bâsh*, which may be translated *the higher* and *lower*.

been the acknowledged superiors, till the elevation of Futteh Aly Khan (who belonged to the latter) to be the general of Shah Tâmâsp, gave him an influence and authority, which led to his being recognised as the head of the whole tribe. When he was murdered by Nâdir Shah, that monarch, who desired to cherish divisions in this formidable tribe, gave the government of Asterabad to a noble of the higher family *; and the consequence was, that Mahomed Hussein Khan, the son of Futteh Aly, was compelled to save his life by taking refuge with the Turkoman tribes, who feed their flocks in the neighbourhood of that town. Aided by these robbers, and a few other adherents, he made, during the life of Nâdir Shah, an attack on his native district, which was at first successful; but, being unable to maintain himself, this expedition terminated in the death or ruin of almost all those who were rash enough to attach themselves to his fortunes. He escaped again to the Turkomans, with whom he had established a connexion that seems always to have afforded him a safe retreat.

We find in the page of Jonas Hanway a very particular and curious account of the capture of Asterabad by Mahomed Hussein Khan, and the subsequent dispersion and punishment of the followers of the Kujur chief. Hanway was in Asterabad when it was taken; and when the valuable investment, of which he had the charge, was presented by Mahomed Hussein to the Turkomans, he heard, with horror, these barbarians demand, that "the merchant, "as well as all his goods, should be given to them. He would,"

* The name of this chief was Zumân-beg. His father, Mahomed Hussein Khan, was a great favourite of Nâdir Shah. It was this chief who, acting by the order of Rezâ Kooli Meerza, put an end to the life of Shah Tâmâsp.

CHAP. XVIII.

they said, " be useful in looking after their sheep." The Persian chief was too generous to comply with such a request. He told them to be content with the plunder: and the man, thus saved from looking after flocks on the shores of the Caspian, not only obtained from the justice of Nâdir Shah the restitution of almost all the property he had lost, but lived to become a most distinguished citizen of one of the first capitals in the universe.

From the occurrence of this event, till the death of Nâdir Shah, a period of nearly four years, Mahomed Hussein Khan remained with the Turkoman tribes*. The moment he heard that the conqueror was slain, he appears to have left his retreat; and we find him, a few months subsequent, in such force, that he defeated (as has been before stated,) a large body of Affghans of the army of Ahmed Shah, who attempted to penetrate into Mazenderan.

Kurreem Khan subjects Fars, and takes the City of Isfahan. A. D. 1756. A. H. 1170.

Kurreem Khan, after he had made himself master of Shiraz, took advantage of the contest in which his enemies, Azâd Khan and Mahomed Hussein Khan, were engaged with each other, not only to subject the whole of Fars to his authority, but to possess himself of the City of Isfahan, and a great part of the Province of Irak†. He was, however, soon compelled to abandon the greatest part of these territories; for Mahomed Hussein Khan, after defeating Azâd Khan, and adding Aderbijan to his possessions, directed his march toward Isfahan, with an army far superior to any that had been assembled under one chief since the death of Nâdir Shah. Kurreem Khan made an attempt to arrest the progress of this force, but in vain: he was compelled to retreat to Shiraz, where he shut himself up, determined to abide a siege.

Is compelled to retreat to Shiraz.

* Tuarikh Kujur.

† Tuarikh Zundeâh.

CHAP. XVIII.

We are informed by an intelligent traveller*, that success completely changed the character of Mahomed Hussein Khan. He had been remarkable for his mildness and moderation; but the near prospect of the crown made him haughty and rapacious. He particularly evinced this change in his altered conduct to the inhabitants of Isfahan, whom he no longer treated with that temper and justice which he had shown when he thought their attachment was of consequence to his interests. He now levied large contributions upon the city, and allowed his troops to commit, unpunished, the most wanton excesses. These proceedings were not more calculated to diminish his reputation than to add to that of his rival, Kurreem, whose behaviour towards the citizens of the capital had, under all circumstances, been the same.

Mahomed Hussein Khan, having completed his preparations, left eight thousand men in Isfahan, and advanced, with a force amounting to nearly thirty thousand, to lay siege to Shiraz†. The defences of that city consisted only of a high mud wall flanked by round towers, and surrounded by a deep dry ditch: but in Persia the science of attack is not more advanced than that of defence; and the slightest fortification seemed formidable to those whose force was chiefly cavalry, and whose unskilful gunners could only fire their unwieldy cannon a few rounds in the course of a day. Nevertheless, every thing concurred to give confidence to the besiegers. The attack commenced at a season when the country round Shiraz is beautiful. The fields were covered with grain; and the most abundant harvest seemed growing for the support of the

Mahomed Hussein Khan lays siege to Shiraz. A. D. 1757. A. H. 1171.

Commences an attack.

* Olivier, Vol. VI. page 70. † Persian MSS.

CHAP. XVIII invaders. But the hopes which the first success that attended their operations, and the appearance of plenty, inspired, soon vanished. Their batteries were hardly opened before they were attacked by successive sallies from the garrison: and while their attention was occupied in repelling these, a considerable body of horse, commanded by Shaikh Aly Khan, a brave and able leader of the tribe of Zund, commenced a predatory warfare upon their supplies, in which he was aided by the inhabitants of the surrounding country, who burnt their own fields, and retired, with their families, and all the property they could carry, into the neighbouring mountains*. The effect of these measures was to produce a scarcity of provisions in the camp of Mahomed Hussein Khan, and to spread discontent among his soldiers. The delays and hardships of a protracted siege, which often weary the patience of well-appointed and disciplined bodies of men, are altogether insupportable to those loose, irregular, and unconnected masses which constitute the force of an Asiatic prince. In the present case, the evil became more dangerous from the composition of the besieging army, a great proportion of which was new levies; and some had, till the flight of Azâd Khan, been fighting for years against the chief under whose banners they now served.

His supplies are intercepted by Shaikh Aly Khan.

While the light troops of Kurreem were employed in harassing the besiegers, that chief not only bravely defended the city, but employed every art to spread defection among his enemies. His efforts were completely successful: and the daily desertion of numerous bodies of his troops warned Mahomed Hussein Khan of

* Tuarikh Zundeâh.

Raises the siege, and retreats to Isfahan.

the necessity of an early retreat*. He suddenly raised the siege, and marched to Isfahan: but the corps he had left at that capital dispersed the moment they heard of his failure. Under such circumstances, he was compelled to retire to Mazenderan, which he reached with a dispirited army, whose numbers had been reduced, by desertion, to twelve thousand men.

Kurreem Khan, after recruiting his forces, and restoring tranquillity to the province of Fars, advanced to Isfahan, where he was received with the most sincere joy. The inhabitants welcomed him as the ruler they loved: and their example was followed by all the principal cities in Irak. Kurreem took care, by his conduct, to preserve a feeling to which he was already so deeply indebted. His military career, since he had become a competitor for the sovereign power, had not been fortunate. He had gained but few victories, and was often defeated. His condition had more than once seemed desperate: but still the preference which the citizens of Persia gave to this prince over his rivals, had the constant effect of enabling him to support reverses, and to take full advantage of every casual success. He could not but be proud of an attachment to which he had no claims but what originated in his personal good qualities: and the strength it gave him must have been a motive for his persevering in that course of moderation and justice by which it had been obtained.

While Kurreem was employed in settling the numerous provinces which now cheerfully submitted to his authority, he detached Shaikh Aly Khan into Mazenderan, and placed under the command of that

* Tuarikh Zundeâh.

CHAP. XVIII general the choice troops of his army, in order that he might completely subdue Mahomed Hussein Khan: but it is not probable that object would have been effected if the tribe of Kujurs had remained united. The division which existed between the two principal families has been before noticed. The chief* of the opposite house to that which had for some years exercised a general rule over the whole, either tempted by the offers of Kurreem Khan, or actuated by a desire of revenging former injuries, deserted, at this critical moment, the cause of his prince, and joined the army of Shaikh Aly Khan†. Several of his relations and adherents were, in consequence of this treachery, put to death: a rash act of resentment, which revived, with increased violence, the feud that had so long distracted this tribe. Though these events must have left Mahomed Hussein Khan with little hope of success, he, nevertheless, determined to meet his enemies; and even these confess, that he fought with a valour which deserved victory. His efforts, however, were in vain. Some new levies, who had just joined his standard, fled soon after the action commenced: and their example was followed by all his troops. We are informed‡, that he would have escaped if his horse had not fallen, which gave his pursuers time to come up: among these was his irritated and implacable enemy, the chief of the Kujurs, who had deserted in the opening of the campaign. He could expect no mercy from this adversary, and only hastened his fate by an attempt at resistance. His head, displayed upon a pike, proclaimed to all,

A. D. 1757. A. H. 1131.

An action, in which Mahomed Hussein Khan is slain.

* The name of this chief, who was the head of the family of Youkhâree-bâsh, was Mahomed Hussein Khan.

† Tuarikh Zundeâh.

‡ Tuarikh Zundeâh.

the triumph of Kurreem Khan over the greatest and most powerful of those rivals* who had disputed with him the rule of Persia. CHAP. XVIII

The conquest of Mazenderan was followed by the submission of Ghilan, and the greatest part of Aderbijan: but the latter province was soon disturbed by the pretensions of Futteh Aly Khan, a chief of the tribe of Affshâr, who had given his support, at different periods, to the competitors that were opposed to Kurreem Khan, and now ventured to proclaim himself the open enemy of that prince: he was, however, defeated in an action that was fought on a plain † situated a short distance to the south of Tabreez. He fled into the City of Oormia ‡; but, after sustaining a siege of some months, seeing no

Pretensions of Futteh Aly Khan.

He is defeated. A. D. 1760. A. H. 1174.

* The principal chiefs of the family of Mahomed Hussein Khan (including all his sons,) fled to the country of the Turkomans, where they remained about four years before they gave themselves up to Kurreem Khan, by whom they were treated with consideration and kindness. Aga Mahomed Khan was the eldest of those princes. Olivier, in his account of this transaction, states, that they were taken by Shaikh Aly Khan as hostages to Shiraz: but this is evidently an error. I follow the Tuarikh Zundeâh of Meerza Saaduck, who expressly asserts, that they gave themselves up some time afterwards, and were treated with great humanity and attention.

† The name of this plain is Kârâ Chemun, or "the Dark Meadow."

‡ "The very ancient City of Urumeah, the Thebarma of Strabo, and supposed "birth-place of Zoroaster, is situated in a noble plain, fertilized by the River Shar, "and on the south-west of the lake to which it gives its name. This town is thirty-two "fursungs from Tabreez, and contains a population of twelve thousand souls. It is "defended by a strong wall and deep ditch, that can be filled with water from the "river; and the neighbourhood produces corn and fruit in abundance. Urumeah "cannot now boast of a single ruin of any consequence; and the natives are not even "aware of the tradition concerning the birth of Zoroaster." — KINNIER's *Memoir of Persia*, page 154.

CHAP. XVIII prospect of success, he threw himself upon the generosity of Kurreem, who did not hesitate to grant him the pardon * he solicited.

And throws himself on the generosity of Kurreem Khan.

Before Futteh Aly Khan surrendered, he had endeavoured, and apparently with success, to engage some of the principal nobles of Kurreem Khan to enter into a conspiracy against the life of that prince. The plot was discovered, and those concerned punished. Some persons of high rank were put to death: and the Persian historian † of Kurreem informs us, that it was for a participation in this conspiracy that the gallant Shaikh Aly Khan was condemned to lose his sight ‡. If this chief, who was related to Kurreem, and whose valour had been so instrumental to his elevation, was tempted by ambition to conspire against his life, he merited the dreadful sentence that was passed upon him: and it is not consistent with that justice, which we owe to the character of a ruler, who had the courage not only to forgive, but to employ, some of the most inveterate of his enemies, to suppose that he was led, by a cowardly jealousy of the increasing reputation of a favourite general, to commit an act that combined, if it proceeded from such a motive, the deepest guilt with the basest ingratitude.

Kurreem Khan's conduct towards the Arab tribes.

Kurreem Khan had been, throughout the whole of his struggle for power, partially supported by the Arab tribes, who inhabit the Persian shore of the Gulf. A large body of these had, indeed,

* He some time afterwards forfeited, by misconduct, his title to clemency, and was put to death.

† Tuarikh Zundeâh.

‡ Olivier (on what authority I know not,) places this act several years subsequent to the period mentioned by the author of the Tuarikh Zundeâh, and states, that it was imputed to a jealousy of the reputation Shaikh Aly Khan had acquired with the army.

marched with him as far as Isfahan: and though their discontent had compelled him to precipitate an action with Mahomed Hussein Khan, in which he had been defeated, principally from their bad conduct, he continued to value their attachment, and was never severe with them except when forced to be so by their excesses, or by their refusal to pay tribute. The vigour with which he acted, when compelled to punish them, increased the respect of this class of his subjects. The most refractory and troublesome of all these petty rulers was Meer Mohunnâ, of Bunder Reeg, a small seaport, half a degree to the north-west of Abusheher. This chief was at once remarkable for his valour and his atrocious wickedness. He had offended the Persian government almost beyond the hope of pardon; having been led, by the desire of plunder, to interrupt, by his depredations, the communication between Shiraz and Abusheher, which had now become the principal port* of the kingdom. When attacked by a numerous army, he defended his possessions on the continent for several months; and when forced to abandon them, he took refuge in the small Island of Corgo, which is situated near the top of the Gulf, at the distance of nearly a degree from Bunder Reeg. On this spot, which does not contain more than two square miles, and has hardly any cultivation, the desperate Arab not only supported a number of his followers, and defeated all the efforts of the Shaikh of Abusheher to subdue him, but added to his means by plundering a number of vessels, and succeeded in surprising the Dutch garrison of the neighbouring Island of Kharruck. These successes, from giving more scope to his dreadful

An account of the Arab chief, Meer Mohunnâ.

* Gombroon was, about this period, almost deserted.

CHAP. XVIII. cruelties, only accelerated his ruin. All around him were enemies: but he might, for some time, have braved external danger, if he could have preserved the fidelity of his own tribe. A rebellion of his followers obliged him to fly to Bussorah, where he was immediately seized, and slain. The governor of that city not only refused his claims to protection*, but, to mark the detestation in which he held his character, directed that his corpse should be cast out into a field to be devoured by dogs. The account of the death of Meer Mohunnâ spread joy from the Court of Shiraz to the shores of India. This monster, at the head of the list of whose crimes was the murder of a father, possessed an energy and courage that had rendered his name an object of universal dread: and the inhabitants of the shores of the Gulf still pronounce it with a mixed feeling of horror and of apprehension.

Conduct of the Arabian tribe of Chaâb.

The territories of the Arabian tribe of Chaâb extend along the sea-shore from the River Taâb, which falls into the sea about a degree to the north-west of Abusheher, to the mouth of the Karoon, which bounds the kingdom of Persia and the province of Bussorah. Their chief, Shaikh Solimân, had made himself so strong during the troubles that ensued on the death of Nâdir, that he ventured to oppose Kurreem Khan, who was obliged to march with a considerable force to reduce him. Solimân, alarmed at his superior numbers, embarked in his boats, and sought refuge in the neighbouring small islands: but he was glad to save from destruction

* The Arabs, though they held Meer Mohunnâ in abhorrence, blamed the Governor of Bussorah for having violated, even in his person, the sacred rights of hospitality: they believe he did so to flatter the Court of Shiraz.

CHAP. XVIII

A. D. 1762.
A. H. 1177.

his fields of grain, and the large plantations of dates, on which the population of this part of Persia chiefly depend for subsistence, by the payment of a considerable sum, and a promise of regularity in the future remittance of his tribute*.

Conduct of Zuckee Khan.

The government of Kurreem Khan was frequently disturbed by the turbulence and ferocity of his brother, Zuckee Khan†. That chief, at one period, openly rebelled; and having possessed himself of a number of the hostages which the principal officers of the kingdom had given as pledges of their fidelity, he fled to the tribe of Fylee, from whom he expected support. The attempt failed; and he was compelled to throw himself upon the clemency of his offended brother. He was not only pardoned, but restored to confidence and employment. We find him immediately afterwards detached to Dâmghân‡, where Hussein Kooli Khan, Kujur||, had excited some disturbances, which Zuckee Khan soon quelled. The Kujur chief fled to the Turkomans, by whom he was seized, and put to death§.

* Persian MSS.

† Zuckee Khan is always called the brother of Kurreem: but he was only the cousin and the half-brother of that prince. His father, Boodâk, was the brother of Eymack, Kurreem's father, and had married Byâghâ, the widow of Eymack, and mother of Kurreem Khan. This lady had three children by her second husband, Iskunder Khan, Zuckee Khan, and a daughter. The latter obtained celebrity from being the mother of Aly Moorâd Khan, who attained and held, for some time, the sovereignty of Persia.—*MS. Genealogical Table of the Zund Family.*

‡ "Dâmghân is supposed to be the ancient Hecatompylos, for some time the "metropolis of the Parthian empire."—Kinnier's *Geography of Persia*, page 173.

|| The author of the Tuarikh Zundeâh states, that Hussein Kooli Khan had been placed in the government of this place by Kurreem Khan.

§ This chief was the son of Mahomed Hussein Khan, and the father of the reigning

CHAP. XVIII.
A. D. 1763.
A. H. 1178.

A more cruel fate awaited those of his followers who fell into the hands of his ferocious conqueror. The Persian historian* who describes the expedition to Dâmghân, is careful to inform us, that it was upon this occasion that the inventive barbarity of Zuckee Khan first made a garden of his enemies. He directed the earth to be opened at equal distances, as if for the reception of trees, to form an avenue. Large branches were then cut, and a prisoner tied to each, with his head towards the root, which being placed where the ground was opened, the soil, as it was thrown in, produced a gradual suffocation. It is horrible even to think on such scenes; but still the relation is important, were it only to make the mind sensible, by extreme contrast, to the blessings of civilization.

The terror which the cruelty of Zuckee Khan inspired, was no doubt useful in preserving the general tranquillity of the kingdom. The known lenity of the ruling prince had encouraged numbers to rebel, with an expectation that, even if unsuccessful, pardon would follow submission. All knew that these hopes were vain when his savage brother was employed. He had succeeded not only in repressing rebellion at Dâmghân, but in Mazenderan†, and several other parts of the empire; and every where his track was marked by blood. The very rumour of his approach was at last sufficient to spread dismay; and those who most execrate his memory confess,

sovereign of Persia. In the Tuarikh Zundeâh it is stated, that he was murdered at the instigation of Hussein Khan Youkhâree-bâsh, the Kujur chief of a rival family, who has been before mentioned, and who was, at this period, Governor of Asterabad.

* Meerza Saaduck.

† The Kujurs of the Youkhâree-bâsh had rebelled, and several of their chiefs were taken, and put to death.

that he greatly contributed to that general peace and security which Persia enjoyed during the latter years of Kurreem Khan. CHAP. XVIII

The troops which civilized nations maintain for their defence, are raised indiscriminately from the mass of the population, and the power to support them increases with those resources which are greatest at periods of the most profound tranquillity. The case is very different with barbarous states, whose armies are formed of a class of men quite distinct from the rest of the community. These receive no regular pay; and, consequently, have their means of subsistence narrowed or extended with the sphere of their action. Such a body, if at all numerous, cannot be supported but in war, where they live upon the enemy; yet it is hazardous to disband men who have no pursuits of industry, and who have hardly any resource, when at peace with foreign powers, but in internal troubles. If (which rarely happens) the wealth of a rude government enables it to pay an army, it cannot allow that to remain idle without the certainty of its soon becoming useless; for, in bodies of men so constituted, efficiency must be the result of that individual energy and experience which actual employment can alone give; and the place of which is, in regular armies, in a great degree supplied by the influence of order, and the impulse of discipline. It is upon this general reasoning that we must account for those constant wars in which we find some of the best Asiatic monarchs engaged; and it is probable, that these considerations influenced the conduct of Kurreem Khan in the attack which he made, a few years before his death, upon the Turkish territories. That prince had continued to display as much moderation in the exercise of his power, as sovereign of Persia, as he had in the progress

CHAP. XVIII

to its attainment. Though he deemed it prudent to confine the pageant * to whom Aly Murdân Khan † had given the name of king; and to refrain from the mockery of a false allegiance, he only styled himself Vakeel, or lieutenant of the kingdom, and seemed to act under no desire of personal aggrandisement. Devoted to Shiraz, which he had made his capital, he had ceased to lead his armies in person: and he even committed the large force which he assembled for the siege of Bussorah to the command of his brother, Sâduck Khan; though he must have been sensible that the ties of blood only rendered it more probable so great a trust would be abused. From every consideration, therefore, of his disposition, and the actual state of Persia at the moment, we must conclude his principal motive for the attack of the Turkish territory was to preserve the internal tranquillity of Persia, by employing those by whom it was most likely to be disturbed in foreign war: and having taken that resolution, he studied to devise pretexts that would render this measure popular with his subjects. To men professing the tenets of the Sheah sect there could be no greater encouragement offered than the prospect of becoming the conquerors of that land which contained the tombs of the holy Aly, and of his sainted sons, Hussein and Hussun; and the most prominent ground ‡ on which Kurreem attempted to justify the war in

Kurreem Khan's motives for attacking the Turkish territory.

* He removed him from Isfahan to a fort called Aubâdâh, on the road between that city and Shiraz. † Vide page 116.

‡ There were several other pretexts. He accused Omar of having, by the aid he had granted to the Imaum of Muscat, prevented the Persians from subduing the province of Oman. He was also said to have plundered some Persian merchants.—*Tuarikh Zundeâh.*

which he engaged, was allied to this feeling*. He demanded from the Court of Constantinople the head of Omar, the Pâchâ of Bagdad, for having levied a tax upon the Persian pilgrims who visited those sacred tombs. The answer which he must have expected soon arrived: the Turkish Emperor refused to abandon his servant for doing his duty, and Sâduck was directed to commence his march. He proceeded along the shore of the Gulf with an army of nearly fifty thousand men; and a fleet, consisting of about thirty vessels, almost all of a very small size, which had been fitted out at Abusheher and Bunder Reeg, accompanied his operations.

Sâduck Khan is sent with an army against the Turks. A. D. 1775. A. H. 1189.

The City of Bussorah, against which this force was directed, is situated upon the right bank of that noble stream called the Shât-ul-Arab, or River of Arabia, which is formed by the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. From the point of their confluence at Koornâh † to Bussorah is nearly sixty miles, and it is about the same distance from that city to the sea. The whole of this extent is navigable for ships of large burthen. The Turkish government have generally some vessels of war at Bussorah, but they are seldom in a state of equipment. This fleet (for so it is termed,) appears

Situation of the City of Bussorah.

* Persian MSS.

† "Koornâh, which is one of three *Apameas* built by Seleucus in honour of his "first wife, Apama, is situated at the point of a triangle, formed by the confluence of "the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. *Apamea*, although now dwindled into a petty town, "was formerly a place of consequence[2]."—Koornâh is situated on a low flat, with apparently a rich soil, and along the river are low banks to prevent the country being flooded. At this spot some oriental traditions have fixed the Garden of Eden.

[2] Kinnier's Memoir of Persia, page 287.

CHAP. XVIII to have offered no efficient resistance to that of Sâduck Khan; who, after he became master of the river, was soon enabled to construct a bridge of boats, by which he passed his whole army to its right bank, and immediately commenced his preparations for a siege. The city which he had to reduce was of great extent, as it contained a number of large gardens, as well as houses, within its walls. The inhabitants were reckoned at forty thousand, and the troops who formed the garrison were more than one fourth of that number. The governor, Solimân Aga, was a brave soldier, and his character gave him every right to expect the attachment of those under his orders. The walls were high, but not strong; and the chief defence consisted of a number of bastions, on which nearly a hundred pieces of cannon were mounted.

Sâduck Khan commences the siege of Bussorah.

Though the siege proceeded slowly, still the Persian army made progress; and the weak Court of Constantinople, alarmed at the prospect of losing a possession of such importance, ordered a number of the neighbouring pâchâs * to march, with all the troops they could collect, to Bagdad. It was at first thought that these were meant to combine with the ruler of that province for the relief of Bussorah; but it soon appeared that they were only instructed to put Omar to death, in the hope that his punishment might satisfy the King of Persia, and cause him to desist from his enterprise †. An envoy was sent to Shiraz, to inform Kurreem Khan that his demand was complied with, and that the cause of the rupture between the two states was removed. But that prince, while he amused the envoy

Arrival of an envoy from Constantinople.

* The Pâchâs of Van, Moossul, Diarbekir, Aleppo, Damascus.

† Olivier, Vol. IV. page 348.

CHAP. XVIII

with promises, was only encouraged, by this proof of the weakness of his enemy, to prosecute his plan to its accomplishment: and the brave Governor of Bussorah, after sustaining a siege, or rather a blockade of thirteen months, was compelled to surrender for want of provisions. Sâduck Khan enjoyed his victory with great moderation, and appeared anxious to reconcile the inhabitants to their change of masters; but the officer* whom he left in command (when he returned to Shiraz,) imprudently engaged in a dispute between two Arab tribes, and sustained a defeat, in which the Persians suffered very severely, and, among others, their commander was slain. Sâduck, on hearing this intelligence, hastened to Bussorah, and, by his conciliating manner and good conduct†, restored peace, and remained in undisturbed possession of his conquest till the death of Kurreem Khan; when a regard for his personal interests and safety led him to abandon it; and the Turkish government, by this accident, regained, without having made any effort for its recovery, one of the most important of their possessions in that quarter of Asia.

Bussorah surrenders. A. D. 1776. A. H. 1190. 27th of Suffer.

Sâduck Khan returns to Shiraz, but is again recalled.

Quells a disturbance in Bussorah. A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193.

From the period of the invasion of Persia till the latter years of the reign of Kurreem Khan, European nations had maintained but little intercourse with Persia, as the distracted state of that empire was most unfavourable for commerce. The English had removed their factory from Gombroon in consequence of the oppressive

Removal of the English factory from Gombroon.

* The name of this chief was Aly Mahomed Khan.

† He was particularly attentive to the English. He told the resident, that the factory he lived in was the only house fit for him to occupy, but that, so great was his respect for the English nation, that he would not take it for that purpose, if the walls were made of gold.

CHAP. XVIII.

conduct of a Governor of Lâr*: but they had afterwards fixed it at Abusheher, where it continued subject to all the vicissitudes of the changing and unsettled government within whose dominions it was established.

Establishment of one at Abusheher.

Conduct of the Dutch.

The Dutch still carried on a trade with Persia and the eastern parts of Turkey: and an event occurred in the beginning of the reign of Kurreem Khan, that would, if the power of that nation had not been on the decline, have given them a permanent and superior influence to all their European rivals on the shores of these kingdoms. Baron Kniphausen, a man of considerable ability, had been appointed, by the Dutch government of Batavia, to be their agent at Bussorah. The Turkish governor of that place, on the pretext that the baron had transgressed the laws† of the country, imprisoned him, and refused to grant his release till he had paid a considerable sum of money‡. The baron proceeded to Batavia, where he justified himself completely to his superiors, and then laid before them a plan which combined the resentment of the injury that had been offered to his country in his person, with the advancement of the interests of the Dutch East India Company. His project was to seize upon

Their agent is confined, and compelled to pay a large sum for his release.

* Nâseer Khan, who, in the year 1761, forced them to give one thousand tomans. The Court of Directors, on hearing of this, immediately ordered them to quit the factory. Nâseer Khan, who had committed other outrages, was taken prisoner by Kurreem Khan in 1763, and carried to Shiraz.

† He accused him of having cohabited with a Mahomedan lady, and of withholding some customs that were the right of the government.

‡ He took fifty thousand rupees from the baron, thirty thousand from his second, and twenty thousand from the broker.

CHAP. XVIII

Kharruck*, an island containing about twelve square miles, which lies near the top of the Gulf; and while it in a great degree commands the navigation of the entrance of the Bussorah river, has an easy communication of a few hours' sail both with the shores of Persia and of Arabia. His plans were adopted. He sailed with two ships, and found no difficulty in taking possession of the island†, where he instantly erected a small fortification. His first step was to make the two vessels he brought with him blockade the Bussorah river; and the detention of some Turkish ships from India compelled the governor of that city not only to make restitution of the money he had extorted, but to court the friendship of the baron, who received equal marks of attention and respect from all the rulers in the vicinity of his new possession. The Island of Kharruck rose rapidly into importance. It was a safe emporium, where merchants were approximated to numerous markets, at which it was advantageous to sell, but dangerous to trust their goods for any length of time, as every change in the government exposed them to the hazard of being plundered. The local position of this island was peculiarly favourable to commerce; and it possessed great advantages, in the abundance and excellence of its fresh water, and the salubrity of its climate. Under circumstances so propitious to its prosperity, it is not surprising that Kharruck should have soon become a flourishing settlement. Its population, which amounted to one hundred poor fishermen and pilots when

Baron Kniphausen takes the Island of Kharruck, and blockades the Bussorah river

Compels the Governor of Bussorah to return all the money he had extorted.

Prosperity of the Island of Kharruck under the Dutch.

* This island is very healthy, has plenty of fine water, and in some parts the soil is good.

† The Shaikh, or Governor, of Bunder Reeg, who claimed the right or lordship of this island, had made the baron a grant of it.—Ives's *Voyage*.

CHAP. XVIII. Baron Kniphausen first established himself, increased, within the eleven years that the Dutch held it, to upwards of twelve thousand souls. It was neglected and lost, as has been described, because it was not worth preserving to the nation* by whom it had been acquired.

Kurreem Khan's encouragement of commerce and agriculture.

The internal commerce of Persia, as well as its agriculture, had greatly revived during the latter years of Kurreem Khan. That prince gave the most particular encouragement to all the industrious classes of his subjects, and to none more than the Armenians who were settled in his dominions. This body of Christians were the first that benefited from his justice: and to the last moment of his life he was anxious for their prosperity. The possessors and cultivators of the soil in Persia have to pay but a very moderate proportion of its produce to the government: but, as the monarch can impose arbitrary fines and requisitions, he may be said to possess the power of taxation at pleasure. The condition of this class, therefore, is almost as dependent for their happiness on his personal disposition, as any other in the community. They enjoyed under Kurreem as much consideration as he was able to give them; and he was, on all occasions, ready to redress the wrongs they suffered from the oppressions of the officers placed over them: but still, from the opposite view which travellers who visited Persia during his reign have taken of the actual condition of his subjects, we must conclude, that the state of the countries which were near the seat of rule, and consequently under his immediate observation, was very different from that of provinces, which, from their remoteness to the

* This account of the Dutch establishment at Kharruck is taken from cotemporary travellers, and from the public records of that transaction.

capital, or the turbulence of their inhabitants, were given over to the arbitrary rule of military chiefs. All the cities in Persia flourished under this prince; but none in any degree to be compared with Shiraz. Kurreem, perhaps, was first induced to make this city his capital, by the circumstance of its being centrical to the pasture lands of those tribes on whose support he chiefly depended, and from the attachment which its inhabitants early showed to his interests. He was at great pains to strengthen its defences; and he improved and ornamented the city itself with a number of useful and magnificent buildings, and beautified its environs by the erection of some fine edifices, near which were planted luxuriant gardens: but he appeared still more desirous of promoting the comfort and prosperity of the inhabitants of Shiraz, than of increasing the magnitude, or adding to the splendour, of that capital. "The rays of this sun of majesty," observes a Persian historian*, speaking of Kurreem Khan, "were spread over the whole "empire; but the influence of its genial heat was most felt at "Shiraz. The inhabitants of that favoured city enjoyed the most "perfect tranquillity and happiness. In the society of moon-faced "damsels they passed their leisure hours; the sparkling goblet "circulated; and love and pleasure reigned in every breast." This is an oriental mode of informing us, that, by the protecting care of their sovereign, they were contented and happy.

CHAP. XVIII

His improvement of the City of Shiraz.

Kurreem Khan died at an advanced period of life, being nearly eighty years of age†. He had enjoyed independent power for

Death of Kurreem Khan. A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193. 13th Suffer.

* Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

† Some authors state that he was seventy-five; others, seventy-six; and several, that he was near eighty. It is probable that Kurreem only knew his own age by a refer-

CHAP. XVIII

twenty-six years; and during the last twenty he had been, without a competitor, the acknowledged ruler of the kingdom of Persia.

His character and government.

The character of this prince is not easily described. It has few of the common features of a despotic monarch. He had ambition; but it was free from the turbulence which almost always mixes with that passion. He preserved, equally amid scenes of violence and of repose, an undisturbed temper; and was, through life, distinguished by a manly simplicity of mind, which kept him as remote from the pomp and vanities of his high rank, as from that affectation which endeavours to conceal its pride under the garb of humility. This prince, though humane, sometimes punished severely: and he employed others of a disposition very different to his own to spread terror among his enemies and rebellious subjects: but his clemency was hardly ever refused to a fallen or a repentant foe. One of the most remarkable features of his character was goodness of heart. He very often repeated an anecdote of his early life, which showed a feeling very uncommon among those of his condition. "When "I was a poor soldier," said Kurreem, "in Nâdir Shah's camp, "my necessity led me to steal, from a saddler, a gold embossed "saddle, which had been sent by an Affghan chief to be repaired. "I soon afterwards learnt that the man, from whose shop it "was taken, was in prison, and sentenced to be hung. My con-

ence to events that occurred about the period of his birth. There is no register of births kept in a wandering tribe: and it is not probable that either this prince, or any of his family, possessed an exact record on such a subject. I one day asked a Persian of a wandering tribe his age. The answer was, *Moollah nâ hustum ke hissâb sâl be dânum:* that is, "I am not a learned man, that I should understand to calculate my "years."

"science smote me, and I replaced the saddle exactly on the place "from whence I took it. I watched till it was discovered by the "saddler's wife, who, on seeing it, gave a scream of joy, fell down "upon her knees, and prayed aloud that the person who had brought "it back might live to have a hundred gold embossed saddles. "I am quite certain," Kurreem used to add, smiling, "that the "honest prayer of the old woman has aided my fortune in the attain-"ment of that splendour which she desired I should enjoy *."

Kurreem Khan was possessed of that noble courage which dares to pardon; and the generous confidence with which he treated those whom he forgave, appears to have almost always attached them to his person. The virtues of this prince had nothing of a romantic character: they were, like all his other qualities, plain and intrinsic. He was reputed pious, and was exact in the performance of his religious duties; but his religion was not austere. His natural disposition was, indeed, gay and cheerful; and he continued to the last to enjoy the pleasures of this world, and anxiously desired that others should do the same. This inclination has given rise to one of the few attacks † that have been made upon the reputation of this prince: but, if we are to believe the concurring testimony of historians, and of living witnesses, we must pronounce that his example, even in the path of dissipation, could not have been very baneful; for his love of pleasure never degenerated into intem-

* Persian MS. Major Campbell's Journal.

† The Russian traveller, Gmellin, who visited, during Kurreem Khan's reign, some of the provinces near the Caspian which had been recently subdued, and were with difficulty kept in subjection, reports him (conformable to the local impression he received,) as a prince immersed in luxury, and heedless of the miseries of his subjects.

perance; nor was he ever unfitted by indulgence for the active performance of his duties as a sovereign.

Kurreem Khan had received no education. It is stated that he could not even write: and from his birth, and the occupations of his early years, it is probable he neither had, nor desired to have, any such accomplishment. The son of a petty chief of a barbarous tribe* would be brought up to despise all attainments, except such as were suited to his condition of life. In these he excelled. Possessed of great bodily strength, and an active frame, he was an admirable horseman, and expert in all his military exercises: but, though unlearned himself, he valued and encouraged learning in others. His court was the resort of men of liberal knowledge. He built tombs over the remains of Sadi and Hafiz, which are deposited near Shiraz, and endowed these edifices with gardens and lands for the support of the dervishes, or holy men, appointed to watch over them. This pious act, while it marked his regard for superior genius, was one of the most popular of his reign with the inhabitants of a city, whose chief boast is that of being the birthplace of those whose memory he so greatly honoured.

It is the usage of the King of Persia to devote a number of hours each day to hear the complaints of his subjects. An anecdote is related of Kurreem Khan, which, while it shows the confidence that was reposed in his temper and justice, admirably illustrates the consideration and feeling with which he performed this important part of his duty. He was one day on the point of retiring from his judgment-seat, harassed and fatigued with a long attendance, when

* The Zund, and all other branches of the Lac, are certainly as barbarous as any of the wandering tribes of Persia.

a man rushed forward in apparent distraction, calling out in a loud voice for justice. "Who are you?" said Kurreem.—"I am a "merchant," replied the man, "and have been robbed and plun-"dered by some thieves of all I possess."—"What were you about," said the prince, "when you were robbed?"—"I was asleep," answered the man.—"And why did you sleep?" exclaimed Kurreem in a peevish and impatient tone.—"Because," said the undaunted Persian, "I made a mistake, and thought you were awake." The irritation of the royal judge vanished in a moment: he was too much pleased with the manly boldness of the petitioner to be offended at the reproach his words conveyed. Turning to his vizier, he bade him pay the amount of the merchant's losses from the treasury. "We must," he added, "try to recover the property from "the robbers*."

The mode which Kurreem Khan took to attain and to preserve his power, was different from that pursued by any former monarch of Persia. He made no effort to gain strength by the aid of religious or superstitious feelings. He neither tried to attach his army by gratifying their lust of plunder; nor courted the applause of a vain-glorious nation by the pursuit of ambitious projects, or the gorgeous display of royal splendour. He was modest, even to his attire; and though his rule was always firm, and at times harsh, his general manner to the meanest of his subjects was familiar and kind. There is no part of the character of this prince with which we are more

* This anecdote of Kurreem Khan is taken from a small Persian MS., and I have heard it from several Persians. It is the custom in Persia, as in other countries, to apply such stories to remarkable personages; but, even in that view, the application proves the impression entertained of the character.

CHAP. XVIII pleased and surprised, than his being able, amid such scenes as those in which he lived, to carry the best affections and feelings of human nature into almost every measure of his government; and his success affords a striking lesson to despotic monarchs. He lived happily; and his death was that of a father, amid a family whom he had cherished, and by whom he was beloved. The inhabitants of Persia to this day venerate his name; and those who have risen to greatness on the destruction of the dynasty which he founded, do not withhold their tribute of applause to his goodness. These, indeed, when meaning to detract from his fame, often give him the highest possible eulogium. "Kurreem Khan*," they say, "was not a great king. His court "was not splendid; and he made few conquests: but it must be "confessed," they add, "that he was a wonderful magistrate†."

* I have repeatedly heard this observation made by the first among those Kujur chiefs who have risen to great power upon the downfall of the family of Kurreem Khan.

† Kutkhodah.

CHAPTER XIX.

An Account of the Descendants of Kurreem Khan, Zund.

CHAP. XIX.

It would be painful, after the history of a prince like Kurreem Khan, to be compelled to dwell at any length upon that of his descendants, who soon forfeited, by their crimes, that power which he had obtained by his virtues. This prince had five sons, of whom four* survived him, to become the victims of the ambition and cruelty of those chiefs of their family, who contended with each other for a crown, which all acknowledged was their inheritance.

A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193.

Zuckee Khan, the moment Kurreem died, assumed the reins of government. Several of the principal chiefs of the Zund tribe† knew that they were personally obnoxious to that chief; and fearing every thing from the atrocity of his character, they seized

* The eldest of Kurreem's sons, Sâlâh Khan, was never raised even to nominal power: he was deprived of sight by his cousin, Ackbar Khan. The second, Abool Futteh Khan, after being a nominal king, had his eyes put out also during the reign of Sâduck Khan. The third, Mahomed Aly Khan, was blinded by Ackbar Khan. The fourth, Mahomed Rahim Khan, had the good fortune to die during the lifetime of his father: and the fifth, Ibrahim Khan, was deprived of his virility by Ackbar Khan. —*Genealogical Table of the Zund Family.*

† Among these were Nâsser Aly Khan, and the sons of Shaikh Aly Khan, the celebrated general of Kurreem Khan.

CHAP. XIX.

Abool Futteh Khan is proclaimed the successor of Kurreem Khan.

upon the ark*, or citadel, at Shiraz, and prepared for a siege. They at the same time proclaimed themselves the adherents of Abool Futteh Khan, the son of Kurreem: but Zuckee Khan deprived them of any popularity they might have expected from this act, by declaring that young prince, and his brother, Mahomed Aly Khan†, the joint successors to the throne of their father. But though he elevated these youths to nominal sovereignty, he himself assumed the substance of power, on the specious pretext of being, from his affinity of blood, the natural guardian of princes, who, from their age, were deemed incompetent to the management of public affairs. He was supported in all his pretensions by his nephew, Aly Moorad Khan‡, a chief of reputation; and their mutual efforts were directed to the reduction of the citadel. This, however, was not an easy task; and, to avert the dangers of a protracted siege, Zuckee Khan had recourse to treachery‖. He pledged his faith, to the nobles who defended it, in the most solemn manner, and not only promised to forgive all that had passed, but to admit them to a share of the highest offices in the state. They believed his professions; submitted; and were instantly seized, and put to death in the most inhuman manner§.

Zuckee Khan assumes the management of public affairs.

Is supported in his pretensions by Aly Moorad Khan, and attacks the citadel.

They treacherously massacre the nobles who defended it.

* This is an Arabic term. It is sometimes pronounced arek, but more generally ark. It literally signifies the citadel, and is never used to describe any other fortification.

† This young prince had married Zuckee Khan's daughter.

‡ The son of the daughter of Boodâk and Byâghâ, consequently the nephew of Zuckee Khan.

‖ Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

§ Captain Franklin, who visited Shiraz seven years after this occurrence, informs us, that he was told by an eye-witness that these chiefs were butchered, in presence of Zuckee Khan, by the common Pehlwans, or public wrestlers of the city, who performed, on this occasion, the parts of executioners. He adds, that the same person assured him

CHAP. XIX.

Sâduck Khan evacuates Bussorah, and advances to Shiraz.

Sâduck Khan, the moment he heard of the death of Kurreem Khan, evacuated Bussorah, and advanced toward Shiraz. When he arrived near that city, he encamped his army, and sent his son, Jaaffer Khan, to wait upon Zuckee Khan, and discover the sentiments of that chief respecting the future settlement of the government. The youth probably went to this conference with a mind not free from prejudice *; and when he returned, he told his father, that, though every word Zuckee Khan had uttered breathed friendship and cordiality, he felt convinced, from what he had observed in the expression of his countenance, and from the looks and manners of all around him, that if he went into the city, he would share the fate of the unfortunate nobles, who had been so recently duped to their destruction by his treacherous arts †. This communication made the impression intended upon the mind of Sâduck; who, having abandoned all thoughts of an union of interest with his dangerous relation, prepared to besiege Shiraz, and appeared confident of success, from the number and the supposed attachment of his troops: but he had to encounter an able and resolute soldier, and one more versed than himself in those daring and decided measures which so often command success. Zuckee Khan, the moment he despaired of overcoming him by treachery, imprisoned Abool Futteh Khan, the eldest son of Kurreem Khan, whom he suspected of

A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193.

Besieges that city.

Zuckee Khan imprisons Abool Futteh Khan.

he saw a Turkoman soldier not only bathe his hands in their blood, but, taking some in his joined palms, he drank a little, and with the remainder washed his beard, exclaiming, "Shooker Ullah!" or "Thanks be to God!" The savage, by this action, meant to recommend himself to the monster he served, as one that delighted "to drink the blood "of the enemies of his chief."

* Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family. † Ibid.

CHAP. XIX.

Proclaims Mahomed Aly Khan sole monarch.

Imprisons three sons of Sâduck Khan.

being well-affected to his uncle's interests, and proclaimed Mahomed Aly Khan *, who had before only shared with his brother the name of king, the sole monarch of Persia. He at the same time made prisoners three sons † of Sâduck Khan, who were in Shiraz; and, having shut the gates of the city, threatened with instant disgrace and death all the families of the officers and soldiers who should continue to adhere to that chief. The effect of these measures was what he had anticipated. The terror entertained of his boldness and cruelty banished every hope that he would hesitate to execute his threats, and all the officers of Sâduck Khan's army, whose families were in the power of his enemy, deserted their chief, to save from ruin and death those who were dearer to them ‡. The brother of the late monarch, and the conqueror of Bussorah, found that all his plans were defeated. Only three hundred men remained attached to his fortune: accompanied by these, he fled to the province of Kerman. A body of horse was sent to cut off his retreat. They overtook him, and an irregular conflict || ensued, in which the leader § of the pursuers was slain, and his disheartened followers returned to Shiraz; while Sâduck Khan continued his march to the province of Kerman, where he took shelter in a small fortress ¶,

The chiefs of Sâduck Khan's army desert.

Sâduck Khan flies to Kerman.

* This prince, as has been before stated, was the son-in-law of Zuckee Khan.

† Their names were Mahomed Tuckee Khan, Aly Nuckee Khan, and Hussein Khan.

‡ Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

|| This action was fought at the pass, or defile of Ursinjân, about forty miles to the eastward of Shiraz.

§ The name of this officer was Mahomed Hussein Khan, Zund Huzzârâh.

¶ Aly Rezâ says, he remained in the fortress of Kussunjân; others, that he went to Bum-Nermânsheer. Both these fortresses are in the province of Kerman.

which was commanded by a noble who continued firm in his attachment. CHAP. XIX.

The most important, if we consider its ultimate consequences, of all the events which occurred at the death of Kurreem Khan, was the flight of Aga Mahomed Khan, Kujur, who had been for many years a prisoner at large in the City of Shiraz. This prince had, for some time after he surrendered himself, been very strictly guarded, and was never allowed to go beyond the walls of the town; but latterly he was permitted to take the amusement of the chase. This indulgence was not more owing to the kindness of Kurreem Khan's character, than to the settled state of his government; which no chief of a tribe, however powerful, could hope to disturb. The extraordinary wisdom of Aga Mahomed had attracted the notice of that ruler, who was, we are told, in the frequent habit of asking his advice on questions of state policy *. Aga Mahomed, therefore, had the fullest opportunity of appreciating the characters of the princes and nobles of the Persian court; and we can believe that he had long looked to the death of Kurreem Khan as the crisis of his own fate. When the last illness of that prince assumed a dangerous appearance, he contrived to leave the city † on the usual pretext of hunting. His sister, who was in the royal haram, sent him intelligence from hour to hour of the progress of Kurreem's disorder. At last the wished-for messenger announced, that the founder of the Zund dynasty was no more. Accompanied by a few

A. D. 1779.
A. H. 1193.

* MS. Memoir.

† He went out of the city on the 12th day of Suffer, A. H. 1193, the day before that of Kurreem's death.—ALY REZA's *History of the Zund Family*.

CHAP. XIX.

Aga Mahomed Khan escapes to Mazenderan.

Proclaims himself king.

attendants, Aga Mahomed Khan commenced his flight*; and, favoured by the confusion of the moment, he reached his native province of Mazenderan in safety. A considerable body of his tribe having gathered round him, he proclaimed himself one of the competitors for the Crown of Persia, and began to collect all the means he could to support his pretensions.

Zuckee Khan detaches Aly Moorad Khan against him.

Aly Moorad Khan revolts.

Zuckee Khan, confident that the chief of the Kujurs would not long remain satisfied with the province of Mazenderan, detached his nephew, Aly Moorad Khan, with the best troops of his army †, to oppose his further progress: but he only increased, by this measure, the danger which he desired to avoid. His nephew was brave and ambitious; and experience taught him, that, in the actual condition of his country, a person of his rank could have no safety but in the possession of power. He had probably only waited for a favourable opportunity of revolting from a ruler in whom he could never repose confidence, and who was hated and dreaded by all his subjects. An appeal which Sâduck Khan, after his flight from Shiraz, made to Aly Moorad, who was then at Teheran, gave him the pretext that he desired. He assembled the officers of his army, and demanded from them if it was not disgraceful to support any longer a chief, who treated the son and brother of Kurreem Khan in the manner Zuckee Khan had done. There was no difficulty in persuading his followers to entertain the sentiments which he professed. These, desirous of the elevation of the leader they immediately served, rejoiced in any

* He travelled with astonishing celerity, having arrived at Isfahan the third day, a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles.

† This force consisted of ten thousand horse, and five thousand infantry.

measure which appeared likely to promote his advancement. Aly Moorad immediately marched to Isfahan, from whence the governor* (whom Zuckee Khan had placed in charge of that city) fled at his approach. All ranks appeared to rejoice at Aly Moorad's success; and he obtained additional popularity by proclaiming, that he had no design beyond that of restoring the eldest son of the virtuous Kurreem Khan to the throne, which was his lawful inheritance.

And marches to Isfahan.

Zuckee Khan, we are told†, became quite furious when he heard of the revolt of his nephew. He immediately assembled all the force he could, and marched toward Isfahan: but the hour was near when this tyrant was to fill up the measure of his guilt, and to fall by the hands of those very men whom he had trained to crime. When he arrived at Yezdikhaust he demanded from the inhabitants the payment of a sum‡ belonging to the public revenue, which he charged them with having secreted; and on their persisting in denying all knowledge of this money, and pleading inability to raise the amount required, he commanded that eighteen of the principal men of the town should be thrown from a precipice, which was immediately under the window at which he sat. Not satisfied with this act of barbarity, he sent

Zuckee Khan assembles all the troops and marches against him.

A. D. 1779.
A. H. 1193.
His cruel acts at Yezdikhaust.

* The name of this governor was Bustâm Khan. He had been nominated to the government as a reward for his conduct in repressing a commotion which had been excited in Isfahan on the death of Kurreem Khan, by Jehangheer Khan and Mahomed Rusheed Beg, sons of Futteh Aly Khan Affshâr, a chief whose pretensions and fate have been before noticed.—Vide Vol. II. page 133.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ Franklin states, that the whole of this sum was only three hundred tomâns,—about three hundred pounds.

CHAP. XIX. for a Syud, or descendant of the prophet, who was remarkable for his piety, and charged him with having taken part of the money he was so anxious to recover. The man protested his innocence, and was doomed, after being stabbed, to be thrown over the same precipice as the others. Peculiarly enraged at what he deemed the obstinacy of his last victim, he directed that his wife and daughter should be given over to the brutal lust of some of his guards, who were of the tribe of Maaffee*: but these men, savage as they were, shuddered at the conduct of their chief, and particularly his last act, which they deemed at once horrid and sacrilegious. While these feelings prevailed, a conspiracy was formed; and those who had long been the instruments of his guilt, established a claim upon the gratitude of their country by the murder of their inhuman leader.

Murder of Zuckee Khan.

The Town of Yezdikhaust, where this event took place, is situated upon the high and rocky bank of a narrow and deep vale, which in this quarter divides the provinces of Irak and Fars. Its remarkable site and rude fortifications give it a very singular and romantic appearance; and it is now interesting from being considered as a scene which has been hallowed by the sword of retributive justice. The memory of Zuckee Khan is held in execration; and the traveller, who is passing Yezdikhaust, is stopt to hear the catalogue of his crimes: he is shewn the window from whence he directed the principal inhabitants, and the holy Syud, to be thrown; and the feelings which this spectacle, and

* The Maaffee are, like the Zund, a branch of the Lac; one of the most numerous of the native tribes of Persia.

W. Smith del.

C. Heath sculp.

VIEW OF THE TOWN OF YEZDIKHAUST.

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CHAP. XIX.

the relation of these deeds of barbarity, excite in the mind, are relieved by the story of his death, and the praises bestowed on those who had the courage to free their country from the rule of such a monster.

A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193. Abool Futteh Khan is proclaimed king.

The character of Abool Futteh Khan, who was proclaimed King of Persia the instant Zuckee Khan was put to death, would not lead to a conclusion that he was at all concerned in the bold act* of justice which placed in his hands a power that he appears to have been unfit to exercise†. His elevation, however, was evidently the only measure which could save the Zund family from that destruction to which it seemed doomed; and for a moment all indulged in the delusive expectation of a long period of tranquillity.

Sâduck Khan hastens to Shiraz.

Sâduck Khan, the moment he heard of Zuckee Khan's death, hastened from Kerman to Shiraz‡. We are told, that this chief was a plain soldier, of a good disposition, but subject to violent passion. The author who gives this account of his character adds,

* Mr. Scott Waring, in his History of this period, affirms, on the authority of a Persian writer, that Abool Futteh Khan was not only concerned in this plot, but took an active part in its execution. I follow a manuscript written by a very respectable Persian, who had the fullest opportunity of knowing the real history of this transaction.

† The only author who speaks at all favourably of the qualities and disposition of this prince is Olivier: but that well-informed and intelligent author seldom refers us to the authority from whence he composed his history. All cotemporary Persian authors that I have read, represent him as weak and dissipated. I have conversed with many persons who knew him well, and they confirmed this account: they added, that he was of a gentle disposition, and unambitious.

‡ The young prince entered Shiraz, as sovereign, on Friday, the thirtieth of Jumadee-ul-awul, A. H. 1193, and was received with great joy by the inhabitants.

CHAP. XIX. that he was not satisfied to live under a weak and dissolute * young prince, who, incapable of governing himself, was too jealous to commit his power to those who had more experience and wisdom †. In the relations in which they were placed, it is not surprising that the uncle and nephew could not agree; but, not content with usurping his authority, and confining his person ‡, Sâduck Khan put out the eyes of the unfortunate Abool Futteh Khan, and proclaimed himself sovereign of Persia. He could not expect that he would be permitted quietly to enjoy a power obtained by so cruel an action: but his only dangerous rival was his nephew and step-son ||, Aly Moorad Khan. Fully aware of the ambitious designs § of that leader, he sent his son, Jaaffer Khan, to assume the government of the City of Isfahan, and to watch his movements.

Confines Abool Futteh Khan, and deprives him of sight.

A. D. 1780. A. H. 1194. Appoints his own son to the government of Isfahan.

Aly Moorad, who was at Teheran when these events occurred, instantly declared himself king, and marched, with all the force he could collect, toward Isfahan, from whence the newly-appointed governor fled at his approach.

Who flies at the approach of Aly Moorad Khan.

* We are informed by the historian of the Zund family, that the only joys of Abool Futteh Khan were the circling goblet and fair damsels; and that, immersed in luxury, he was altogether unfit for government.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ Sâduck Khan and his sons broke in upon him when in his haram, and seized him without meeting with any opposition.

|| Sâduck Khan had married the mother of Aly Moorad; and his eldest son, Jaaffer Khan, was a half brother of that chief.

§ As long as Abool Futteh Khan was king, Aly Moorad had professed allegiance. He had, during that period, marched against Zûlfekâr Khan, of Khumsâ, who had rebelled and seized upon the countries in the vicinity of Kazveen, Sultaneah, and Zunjân. Aly Moorad defeated and slew this chief, whose head, according to usage, he sent to Shiraz.

CHAP. XIX.

Aly Nuckee is sent with a force against Aly Moorad, who is deserted by his troops.

Sâduck Khan, having assembled a considerable army*, placed it under the command of his son, Aly Nuckee, whose first operations were completely successful. He attacked and discomfited the advance of Aly Moorad; and the troops with that prince were so discouraged by this slight reverse, that they dispersed in different directions. A few went over to Aly Nuckee; the remainder retired to their respective homes. The deserted Aly Moorad, accompanied by his own family and a few faithful adherents, retreated to Hamadan, and must either have been taken or compelled to fly his country, if he had been immediately pursued. Sâduck Khan, we are informed†, wrote to his son to desire he would not lose a moment in improving the great advantage which fortune had given him: but the idle youth, intoxicated with his success, thought of nothing but enjoying his triumph. He entered Isfahan as a conqueror, and for more than a month‡ that he remained in that city, gave himself up to every species of excess. The moments which he so improvidently wasted were taken full advantage of by Aly Moorad. That chief, taught by past misfortunes to know that his sole dependence was upon his own efforts and the attachment of his army, evinced, on this occasion, an union of the most resolute spirit‖ with the most

He retreats to Hamadan.

Aly Nuckee returns to Isfahan.

* This force, which consisted of twenty thousand men, had been engaged in besieging Yezd. Aly Nuckee was joined, before he encountered Aly Moorad's army, by his brother, Hussein Khan. † *Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.*

‡ According to Aly Rezâ, he remained in Isfahan between thirty and forty days.

‖ He was not only refused protection, but threatened with violence by a powerful chief who had deserted from his army, if he went to Hamadan: but, instead of avoiding that city as he had been advised, he advanced rapidly with a few followers, took its ungenerous governor by surprise, slew him, and used his wealth in the payment of his new levies.

CHAP. XIX.

conciliating temper: and his conduct had more effect upon those he desired to gain, from being contrasted with the vanity, the insolence, and the dissipation of Aly Nuckee Khan, who, roused at last from his dream of pleasure, marched from Isfahan to complete his conquest of Irak. But the hour of success was past: he was met near Hamadan by Aly Moorad, and was in his turn abandoned by almost all his followers. This unexpected defection filled his mind with dismay, and gave his enemy an easy victory. He was compelled to fly to Shiraz; and the victorious Aly Moorad Khan, encouraged by some further successes in the field *, resolved upon laying siege to that city.

Marches to complete his conquest of Irak.

Aly Moorad Khan defeats Aly Nuckee.

Sâduck Khan, when he learnt that Aly Moorad was advancing to attack his capital, detached an army (chiefly infantry,) to a position about twenty-five miles from Shiraz †, with orders to oppose his progress: but the different corps of which it was composed quarrelled about the distribution of their provisions; and the whole retreated in a disorderly manner, pursued by the horse of Aly Moorad Khan, who hastened to take advantage of an occurrence which promised more important results, as it evinced a want of union and discipline among those with whom he had to contend.

A. D. 1781.
A. H. 1196.
Also a body of troops near Shiraz.

Shiraz was blockaded, rather than besieged, for a period of eight months. The assailants had made no progress in destroying the defences; but both the inhabitants and the troops were reduced to

Blockades Shiraz.

* His troops had gained several advantages over those of Sâduck Khan, particularly in an action that took place at Abâdâh, where Tâher Khan, the son of Sâduck Khan, commanded the forces of his father.

† The name of the village they encamped at was Hâzârbizâ.—ALY REZA's *History of the Zund Family*.

such distress for want of supplies, that a general spirit of revolt began to display itself, which terminated in a part of the garrison seizing one of the gates, and giving it up to Aly Moorad Khan, whose army immediately took possession of the town*, but committed no outrage that could cause those who were within the walls to regret the desire they had for some time entertained of submitting to his authority.

A. D. 1781. A. H. 1196. Sâduck Khan surrenders, and is put to death.

Sâduck Khan, with his family, retreated to the citadel: but he was soon compelled to surrender, and was put to death† with all his sons that had reached manhood, except Jaaffer Khan, who had made his terms (long before the city was taken,) with the conqueror.

His character and conduct.

Sâduck had evinced, during the lifetime of his brother, Kurreem, a moderation and judgment that had given a very favourable impression of his disposition; and his conduct at the siege of Bussorah added to his former character of a respectable man the reputation of a good soldier: but, in his latter years, we lose all respect for an inactive and indulgent parent, who, shutting himself up in his capital, appeared alike insensible to the incompetence and the vices of his sons, whom he continued to intrust with the command of his armies, and the government of his provinces, till a general disgust at their misconduct and oppression alienated all minds from his rule. Nor can we deplore the fate of a chief who attained power by depriving of his crown and of the blessing of sight‡, the son of a brother, to

* Shiraz was taken on the eighteenth of Rubbee-ul-awul, A. H. 1195; February, A. D. 1781.

† Aly Rezâ states, that he was put to death; other accounts inform us, that his eyes were first put out, and then poison administered; while another asserts, that, frantic at the loss of sight, he dashed his brains out.

‡ Franklin, Olivier, and Waring, agree in stating, that the eyes of Abool Futteh Khan were put out by Sâduck Khan: and it appears almost impossible that the

CHAP. XIX.

whose courage and virtues he and his family were indebted for all they possessed; and whose memory was so revered in Persia, that the inhuman Zuckee Khan had not dared to outrage public feeling by the commission of that crime by which Sâduck Khan had commenced his unpropitious reign.

Aly Moorad Khan becomes sovereign of Persia.

Aly Moorad Khan was now sovereign of Persia; and his character and success seemed to promise some years of rest to that disturbed kingdom. Among the chiefs of his army, there was none who, during the siege, had distinguished himself more for his courage and conduct than Ackbar Khan, the son of Zuckee Khan: but we may conclude that chief was as cruel and revengeful as he was brave and enterprising, from a knowledge that he not only urged Aly Moorad to put Sâduck Khan, with his three younger sons, and some of his principal nobles, to death, but obtained permission to be their executioner. His eagerness for their fate precipitated his own: he was accused of having plotted against the life of the ruler he served; and it could not have been difficult to persuade Aly Moorad of the dangers he had to apprehend from his ambitious cousin. He believed, or affected to believe, that he was guilty: and the prince, Jaaffer Khan, became the willing instrument of putting to death* the man whose hands were yet stained with the blood of his father and of his brothers.

former, who visited Shiraz in 1786, when Jaaffer Khan, the son of that prince, was upon the throne, could be mistaken in such a fact. Yet Aly Rezâ, in his History of the Zund Family, distinctly states, that the eyes of this prince and his brothers were put out by Aly Moorad Khan, when he took Shiraz. But this is probably an attempt of a partial historian to remove the guilt of this act from a prince for whose memory he cherished respect.

* Franklin and Olivier states, that he conspired against the life of Aly Moorad

Returns to Isfahan.

After remaining a few months at Shiraz, Aly Moorad Khan returned to Isfahan, which city became, during his reign, the capital of the kingdom. He confided so far in his half brother, Jaaffer Khan, as to employ him in the government of a province*. The command of his army was given to his son, Shaikh Vais, who was detached to the north-western frontier to keep in check Aga Mahomed Khan. This young prince was at first very successful. He invaded Mazenderan, took Sâri, the capital of that province, and defeated the chief of the Kujurs, who fled to Asterabad. A force was detached in pursuit of him: but the rash commander † of this corps advanced without securing the difficult defiles through which he had passed. The consequence was, these were occupied by the enemy, who succeeded, not only in cutting off his communication with the army in Mazenderan, but in preventing any supplies from reaching his camp. The distress which was the consequences of these operations compelled him to attempt a retreat, but that was impracticable. He was attacked, defeated, and slain, by Aga Mahomed Khan; and almost all his followers either lost their lives, or were made prisoners. The few who escaped communicated a panic to the troops with Shaikh Vais, who instantly dispersed, and, by their cowardice, compelled their leader to abandon Sâri, and

Shaikh Vais is detached against Aga Mahomed Khan.

A. D. 1782. A. H. 1197.

Whom he defeats, and sends a force in pursuit of him.

A. D. 1784. A. H. 1199.

Khan; Waring deems his death to have proceeded from envy of his superior talents. Aly Rezâ, in his History of the family, informs us, that there was a mixture of both motives; that Ackbar Khan had, no doubt, ambitious views; and that Aly Moorad Khan dreaded him so much, as to be glad of a pretext for putting him to death: this is probably the fact.

* He was first appointed to Shuster, and afterwards to the Khumsâ.

† Mahomed Zâhir Khan.

CHAP. XIX.

Shaikh Vais abandons his conquests and retreats to Teheran, where he is joined by Aly Moorad.

the other conquests which he had made. He retreated to Teheran, where he was joined by Aly Moorad Khan, whose rage against the chiefs that had deserted his son was so great, that he ordered several of them to be put to death in a most cruel* and disgraceful manner.

Who sends another army into Mazenderan.

Aly Moorad Khan, though suffering under a very severe illness, evinced, on this occasion, the most active energy. He had formed another army, which he sent into Mazenderan; and was preparing to support it in person, when he learnt that Jaaffer Khan†, encouraged by the intelligence that he had received of the reverses which his arms had sustained, and by a report of the dangerous state of his health, had not only revolted, but had actually commenced his march towards the capital. Aly Moorad was so irritated at this event, that he instantly resolved to proceed to Isfahan. His ministers and medical attendants entreated him to remain where he was, till the violence of his disease had abated; and the latter gave it as their opinion, that the fatigue of travelling at that severe season of the year (for it was the depth of winter,) would be attended with extreme hazard to his life: but the impatient monarch refused to listen to their advice; his mind could think of no danger but that which threatened his power. Their predictions, however, proved true, and he expired‡ on the road. The principal officers of his court concealed his death from the army till it had reached the

A. D. 1785. A. H. 1199. His death.

* Aly Rezâ states, that he commanded that their brains should be beaten out by wooden mallets.

† This prince, we are told by Aly Rezâ, was, at this period, at Zunjân in the Khumsâ, and that he directed his march to Isfahan.

‡ He died on the twenty-eighth of Suffer, A. H. 1199, (eleventh of February, 1785,) at the village of Moortchâkhour, situated about thirty miles from Isfahan.

capital: and the royal property was, by this wise precaution, saved from pillage; for almost all the troops who had attended his march, when they learnt he was no more, spread themselves over the country, and began to plunder in every direction.

And character

The character of Aly Moorad Khan has been variously given. He appears to have possessed an energetic and firm mind. There can be no better claim to character than the respect of an able enemy. Aga Mahomed Khan, who found it difficult, while this prince lived, to maintain Mazenderan, was wont to say to those of his adherents who urged him to advance into Irak, "Let us wait till "that respectable blind gentleman* (so he always called Aly Moorad, "who had lost one of his eyes,) is out of the way, and then, but not "before, we may succeed in such an enterprise."

Bauker Khan usurps the name of king.

A period of five days elapsed from the death of Aly Moorad till the arrival of Jaaffer Khan at Isfahan; during which short period the name and ensigns of royalty were usurped by Bauker Khan, the governor of that city; a vain, imprudent man, who appears to have had no means whatever of supporting his pretensions. He fled at Jaaffer Khan's approach, but was pursued and taken, and his ambition only obtained him the distinction of sharing the imprisonment of the relations of his late sovereign. The person whose pretensions to the throne Jaaffer Khan had most cause to apprehend, was Shaikh Vais, the son of the deceased monarch. He addressed a letter to that prince, couched in the most friendly terms: but as soon as he had deluded him within his power, the mask was thrown

Is taken and imprisoned by Jaaffer Khan.

* I have been assured by many who had heard Aga Mahomed speak of Aly Moorad say, that he always called him the *koor mootâshukus*, or "the respectable "blind man."

CHAP. XIX.

Who deprives Shaikh Vais of sight.

off, and the confiding youth was deprived of sight, to prevent his ever disturbing the reign of his treacherous uncle.

Aga Mahomed Khan advances into Irak.

Aga Mahomed kept the promise which he had often made to his followers, of leading them into the plains of Irak on the death of Aly Moorad. The moment intelligence of that desired event reached him, he issued from the mountains of Mazenderan, accompanied by only five or six hundred men; and as he found that his numbers were hourly increased by the junction of his own adherents, and the disaffected chiefs of his enemies, he pushed boldly on towards Isfahan, satisfied that decided success alone could keep an army composed as his was together. It is affirmed by some writers*, that he had a secret correspondence with several of the principal nobles in the country which he invaded: but there had been little time for such intrigues, as he was at Asterabad when

A. D. 1785. A. H. 1200. Enters Isfahan

Aly Moorad died; and in little more than two months from that date he entered Isfahan†, from whence Jaaffer Khan fled at his approach in such confusion, that his baggage, treasure, and even the ensigns of royalty, were plundered by the rabble‡ of the capital.

Jaaffer Khan is welcomed to Shiraz.

While his formidable rival was establishing himself at Isfahan, Jaaffer Khan was welcomed to Shiraz. The fidelity of Syud

* Olivier states, that he was invited by Bauker Khan, but gives no authority for this assertion. The fact is not stated in any of the histories or memoirs of this period that I have perused.

† He entered that city on the sixth of May. The distance from Asterabad is four hundred miles.

‡ We are told, that the rabble, who plundered Jaaffer Khan's baggage, were encouraged and led by some nobles who had escaped from prison: among these was Bauker Khan, who has been before mentioned. This chief had not only been imprisoned, but severely beaten by Jaaffer Khan, to make him discover his wealth.

Moorad *, the governor of that city, was very doubtful; but the allegiance of its inhabitants had been preserved by the influence of their magistrates. The most active of these was Hajee Ibrahim, who was immediately promoted by his grateful sovereign to the high office of kalanter (or chief civil magistrate) of the province of Fars.

Aga Mahomed Khan did not remain long in possession of his conquest. An unsuccessful attack which he made upon some tribes of mountaineers †, led the fluctuating bands, who had been the instrument of his success, to desert what they deemed his falling fortunes. He was consequently obliged to make a precipitate retreat to Teheran: and while he employed himself in forming a more efficient force, Jaaffer Khan succeeded in repossessing himself of Isfahan ‡: but the advance of Aga Mahomed obliged him again to abandon that city; and the remainder of his reign was a defensive war against that ruler, who, master of almost all Irak, annually threatened an attack on Shiraz.

Aga Mahomed Khan retreats to Teheran.

Jaaffer Khan takes Isfahan, but is compelled to abandon it.

Jaaffer Khan had not been more successful in repressing the rebellion of his own subjects, than in opposing his foreign enemies. His relation, Ismail Khan ||, whom he had intrusted with the

A. D. 1786.
A. H. 1201.

* Syud Moorad Khan was the nephew of Aly Moorad.

† He attacked the Bukhteeârees, who inhabit the great ranges in the vicinity of the capital, and whose complete reduction had hardly been effected by the energy of Nâdir Shah: since whose death they had maintained their former rude independence.

‡ Raheem Khan, the governor, defended the citadel for some time, and was, when taken, put to death.—Aly Reza's *History of the Zund Family*.

|| Ismail Khan was a cousin of Jaaffer Khan. His father, a brother of Kurreem Khan, died during the lifetime of that ruler.

CHAP. XIX. government of Hamadan, revolted, and defeated the army* which he led against him. He was also repulsed with considerable loss from the City of Yezd†, which he made an effort to reduce.

A. D. 1788. A. H. 1203. Lootf Aly Khan is sent to subdue Lâr.

But in the beginning of the last year of his reign, fortune seemed more favourable. His son, Lootf Aly Khan, had made a successful expedition into the mountains of Lâr, and, encouraged by Aga

Marches to Isfahan.

Mahomed Khan's absence, he had marched with a considerable force to Isfahan, and defeated the troops which had been left for its defence. But his triumph was short: a report of the near approach of his formidable rival, obliged him to evacuate that city, which was never again possessed by a prince of the Zund family.

We are informed by an authority‡ to which we cannot refuse credit, that Jaaffer Khan was kind to his subjects, and gracious to strangers; that his temper was mild; and that he was inclined to justice. This favourable account, which is given of a luxurious prince enjoying himself at a moment of comparative repose, and whose affairs were at that period administered by a wise and popular minister||, is not irreconcilable to that character which we are dis-

* This action took place on the second of March, 1786. The victory is chiefly ascribed to Khoosroo Khan, the Waly of Ardelân, who brought a large corps of Kurds to the aid of Ismail.

† The governor of that city, Tuckee Khan, was aided by the independent chief of Tubbus, a neighbouring town in Khorassan.

‡ Franklin, who resided for some time at Shiraz during the reign of this prince.

|| His name was Meerza Hussein, a most respectable man. He was the father of Meerza Boozoorg, the prime minister of the Prince Shah Abbas, the heir apparent of Persia.

posed to form of this ruler, from a contemplation of the events of his life: nor is the possession of the negative virtues ascribed to him at variance with those charges of cowardly weakness, and meditated treachery, which have been affixed to his memory. There can be no doubt that it was the total disregard which this monarch showed to the honour of one of his most faithful and distinguished leaders, and to his own pledged faith, which led to his becoming the indirect instrument of his own destruction, and gave to the blow of his assassin the colour, if not the reality, of justice.

Conduct of Hajee Aly Kooli.

Among the chiefs who served this ruler, there was none more distinguished than Hajee Aly Kooli, of Kazeroon. This nobleman had been sent to quell a very serious revolt in the country to the east of Kashan. He had subdued the leader* against whom he had been detached; and among the prisoners he had made was a corps of fifteen hundred Khorassan infantry; who, after defending themselves bravely, had capitulated upon the express condition of being honourably treated. Jaaffer Khan refused to ratify this agreement, and directed that the men of this corps should be deprived of their arms, and thrown into prison†. It was in vain that his general represented that this act would be alike impolitic and disgraceful. His remonstrances were disregarded; and his earnest request that his honour might be preserved from the stain which so flagrant a breach of promise would entail upon him, was treated with slight, if not with contempt. The indignant chief resolved to quit the service of a monarch who had sacrificed his reputation. He left the army, accom-

* The name of this chief was Mahomed Hussein Khan, Arab. He was aided by Meer Mahomed Khan of Tubbus.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

CHAP. XIX. panied by all his followers *; and, notwithstanding the alternate threats and entreaties of his monarch, he retired to Kazeroon †. It is probable that Jaaffer Khan had not power at the moment it occurred of preventing ‡ this act of open contumacy, but he soon afterwards sent an army to reduce Hajee Aly Kooli to obedience. This leader, who had, subsequently to his departure from camp, refused to obey a summons to attend court, was at last persuaded to yield: he did not, however, consent to go to Shiraz, till the monarch he had offended had sworn upon the Koran that he would not offer him the slightest injury: but Jaaffer Khan could not forgive a man whom he had so deeply wronged; he seized him; and, unmindful of his faith, threw him into a prison, where he was doomed to linger out the remainder of his existence. Rendered desperate by his situation, the chief of Kazeroon entered into a conspiracy with some other prisoners to destroy the despot by whom he had been so cruelly treated. Among these Syud Moorad Khan || had, from his high birth and former employment, the most influence. When the plot was ripe for execution, a slave, who had been bribed, managed to convey poison §

* These were almost all infantry. † Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ It is possible that the chiefs of his army would have refused to act against Hajee Aly Kooli on an occasion when the question was one of personal honour, and evidently unmixed (at the moment) with any desire of revolt.

|| Syud Moorad, who had been Governor of Shiraz, was first trusted and employed, and afterwards confined, by Jaaffer Khan; who ordered him to be beaten very severely, to compel him to discover his riches. — FRANKLIN.

§ I here follow the History of Aly Rezâ, who is very particular, and, I have no doubt, correct in his account of the death of Jaaffer Khan. Waring states, that the poison was administered by a female slave, who had formerly belonged to Syud Moorad

into the victuals of Jaaffer Khan; and when that monarch was writhing under its effects, the prisoners were released by their friends, and, rushing into his chamber, put an end to his existence. The head of their sovereign, thrown from the citadel into the square before its gate, announced to the astonished inhabitants of Shiraz that their ruler was no more.

Syud Moorad Khan is proclaimed king.

Lootf Aly Khan, the son of Jaaffer Khan, was in Kerman when his father was murdered; and Syud Moorad Khan, through the influence of the conspirators who had acted with him, was proclaimed king; but he only reigned a few months. Hajee Ibrahim, the principal magistrate of the City of Shiraz, who was warmly attached to the cause of the absent prince, disposed a number of the inhabitants, and the chiefs of tribes, to the same interest: and Lootf Aly Khan, who had been compelled, on receiving the first intelligence of the events which had occurred, to fly from the uncertain fidelity of his own troops to the Shaikh of Abusheher, was soon enabled to assert his claim to the crown of his father. The Arab chief, who had granted him protection and aid, died immediately after his arrival at Abusheher; but with his last breath he charged his son * to devote himself to Lootf Aly Khan; whose small army, when he first took the field, was almost entirely formed of the followers of this petty ruler. The approach of a considerable corps under the

Khan. Olivier (Vol. VI. page 209,) asserts, that this prince had taken medicines to lessen his corpulence, which had such an effect upon his general health, as to reduce him to a state of debility and suffering, that made it easy for the conspirators to attack and overcome him.

* Shaikh Nâsser, who was till very lately the chief of Abusheher, and is still living.

CHAP. XIX.

Detaches an army against Lootf Aly Khan.

brother* of Syud Moorad threatened destruction to this force: but the second in command† being attached to Hajee Ibrahim, prevailed upon the soldiers to seize their general, and to declare in favour of the prince whom they were sent to oppose; who, encouraged by this event, hastened to the capital, where the influence of his friends had been so effectually exerted, that he was welcomed by the unanimous voice of its inhabitants. Syud Moorad Khan, who had shut himself up in the citadel, was soon compelled to surrender, and suffered death: but Hajee Aly Kooli, whose defection from that cause, which resentment and despair had led him to adopt, was essential to the success of this revolution, had, with several others, received the most solemn assurances of pardon from Hajee Ibrahim; and Lootf Aly Khan, on his accession to the throne, not only confirmed these promises, but marked with favour and confidence those to whom they were made.

Lootf Aly Khan is welcomed into Shiraz.

Syud Moorad surrenders, and is put to death.

An account of Hajee Ibrahim

Before we proceed further with the history of Lootf Aly Khan, it appears necessary to say a few words of the origin and rise of a man, whose name became, about this period, so conspicuous in the annals of his country. Hajee Ibrahim was the son of Hajee Hâshem ‡, a respectable magistrate of Shiraz, who having lost his eye-sight

* Shah Moorad. † His name was Aly Himmut Khan.

‡ The name of Hajee Hâshem is still held in great respect in his native city. When the great conqueror, Nâdir Shah, encamped there, this magistrate gave him an entertainment in the garden of *Dil Gooshâ*, near the tomb of Sadi. This event, which flattered the vanity of the family, as it proved the consequence of Hajee Hâshem, is related in the History of Hajee Ibrahim: and the son of that minister, Meerza Mahomed Khan, gave me an entertainment in 1800, on the same spot where (he took care to inform me) his grandfather had feasted Nâdir Shah and his court about seventy years before.

through age, was, during his latter years, unfit for business, and left a large family in very low, if not distressed circumstances: but his son, Hajee Ibrahim, early succeeded to the office of magistrate to one of the wards of his native city: and his manly character, in which good temper and good sense were combined with the most extraordinary fortitude, raised him rapidly into high employment. He had been placed in the situation his father held by Kurreem Khan, and promoted to higher charge * by *Aly Moorad*; and, as it was chiefly owing to his exertions that Jaaffer Khan obtained such easy possession of Shiraz when forced to fly from Isfahan, he had (as has been before stated,) raised Hajee Ibrahim to the high station of kalanter, or first magistrate of the province of Fars: and the influence which that situation gave, enabled him to repay his debt of gratitude to the father, by placing his son upon the throne.

Character of Lootf Aly Khan. A. D. 1789. A. H. 1204.

No event could appear more propitious to the happiness of his country, or more likely to restore the fallen fortunes of the family to which he belonged, than the elevation of Lootf Aly Khan. Though this prince was not yet twenty years of age, he had been matured by continual employment during his father's reign, and he was already ranked, both in the estimation of his friends and enemies, among the bravest and the best soldiers of his country. His appearance was singularly calculated to win that admiration which his qualities commanded: his countenance was beautiful, and full of animated expression: his form tall and graceful; and, though slender, he was active and strong. In skill as a horseman, and in dexterity at all martial

* He was made magistrate of all the Hyderee mâhâls, or wards termed Hyderee, which included more than half the city.

CHAP. XIX. exercises, he was unrivalled: nor was he deemed wanting in those mental qualities which his situation required. He had displayed, on several occasions, as much conduct as courage: and before he ascended the throne, his manners were kind and prepossessing, particularly to his inferiors: but, soon after he obtained power, his disposition changed, and his mind appears to have lost some of its best qualities. He was no longer mild and conciliating, but proud and self-sufficient. The gratitude and esteem which he expressed, and probably felt at the moment, for Hajee Ibrahim, whose attachment to his cause had enabled him to attain the throne, gave way to feelings of alarm and suspicion. Nor was it, perhaps, surprising that he should have viewed with more jealousy than regard the subject who had shown himself possessed of the dangerous power of placing the crown upon his head.

Lootf Aly Khan is defeated by Aga Mahomed Khan. A. D. 1789. A. H. 1204.

Lootf Aly Khan was hardly established in the government, before Aga Mahomed Khan advanced to attack him. The young prince ventured to meet his enemies in the field *; but he was defeated by superior numbers, and forced to fly to Shiraz. The Kujur prince, encouraged by this success, immediately invested that city: but, after a vain endeavour (continued for more than a month) to make some impression upon its defences, he raised the siege, and returned to Teheran, which had now become the capital of his kingdom.

A. D. 1790. A. H. 1205.

The next year Lootf Aly Khan, who expected a repetition of this attack, made formidable preparations to resist it: but Aga Mahomed Khan was occupied in Aderbijan; and the young ruler of Fars, un-

* This battle was fought at a village called Hâzârbizâh, within six fursukhs, or twenty-five miles, of Shiraz.

CHAP. XIX.

Lootf Aly Khan marches into Kerman.

willing that the force he had collected should remain idle, resolved to march into Kerman, to compel the governor* of that province to submit to his authority. The season of operations was almost past; and all the prudent counsellors of Lootf Aly Khan urged him to accept the terms offered by the chief of Kerman, which included the full acknowledgment of his authority, the regular payment of the revenue of the province, and every submission that could be required of him, except his personal attendance at court. But on this the impetuous prince insisted; and, with a view of enforcing it, he laid siege, during a very severe winter, to the City of Kerman. He was discomfited, his historian † informs us, not by the garrison he besieged, but by the elements. Almost all the horses, and many of the men of his army, perished through cold and hunger: for when the snow became deep, it was impossible to furnish his camp with regular supplies of provisions. Compelled, by the defection of some of his troops, and the clamorous discontent of all, to raise the siege of Kerman, he returned to Shiraz, with a mind rendered sullen and irascible by the reverse he had sustained.

Lays siege to that city.

Is compelled to raise it, and returns to Shiraz.

Before he proceeded on this unfortunate expedition, he had appointed one of his younger brothers, who was quite a child, to the nominal rule of Fars: but he had, at the same time, committed the civil government of Shiraz, and the countries in its vicinity, to Hajee Ibrahim. The command of the garrison of that city, with separate powers, was given to a chief of his own tribe, called Burkhoodâr Khan; and the ark, or citadel, was placed in charge of another nobleman of the Zund family. This division of authority, which was

* The name of this chief was Hussein Khan Khâkee.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

CHAP. XIX. meant to guard against the effects of treachery, tended only to promote it. Burkhoodâr Khan, who was a weak and arrogant man, vain of his rank and of his independent power over the military, insisted, but without effect, upon Hajee Ibrahim paying him all those submissive attentions, which in Persia are considered as due to a superior. Offended at what he deemed a personal insult, he laboured to impress his prince with the belief, that so marked a proof of disrespect to a lord of the Zund family, could only have been shown by a man who cherished traitorous designs. If these representations were not altogether believed, they still made a serious impression on the irritated mind of Lootf Aly; and every act, after he returned from Kerman, proved that he had no longer that respect or confidence which he before entertained for his minister.

An event had occurred some time before this period, which had greatly weakened that reliance which Hajee Ibrahim was at first disposed to place on the character of his sovereign. It has been already stated, that Lootf Aly Khan had, at the earnest solicitation of that minister, pardoned a number of persons supposed to be concerned in the conspiracy against his father's life. Among these was a man called Meerza Mehdy, who had been formerly employed by Jaaffer Khan*; but, on being discovered in some peculation, was disgraced by that monarch, and condemned to lose his ears. When the head of Jaaffer Khan was thrown from the citadel, it had been exposed to a thousand indignities; and, according to popular rumour, Meerza Mehdy had revenged himself by cutting off the ears. The man had always denied the truth of this accu-

* He was Lashkur-novees; the duties of which are, to keep a register of the troops, and to transact all business relative to the pay of the army.

sation; and Hajee Ibrahim, who professed to be fully persuaded of his innocence, solicited his pardon of Lootf Aly Khan; who not only granted it, but said, if the accusation had been true, he freely forgave the meerza from the consideration that he had for his mediator. Several months subsequent, when the prince was distributing honorary dresses, one was given to Meerza Mehdy. This circumstance was reported to the mother of Lootf Aly Khan, who sent for him, and asked, if it was not enough that he should be required to forgive the murderers of his father. "Is it necessary," she added, "that you should degrade yourself by bestowing marks of regard and favour upon a wretch who mutilated his remains*?" This upbraiding language had all the effect intended upon the violent temper of the prince. He returned to his court, summoned Meerza Mehdy, and, after reproaching him with his crime†, directed him to be thrown into a fire. Hajee Ibrahim had been sent for, but arrived only in time to hear from the prince what he had done, and to see, with inward horror, the remains of the man whose pardon had been so fully granted to his intercession‡.

The mutual distrust which had arisen between the sovereign and the minister became apparent to all. The proud spirit of Lootf Aly

* Persian MS.

† Lootf Aly Khan, we are informed, demanded of Meerza Mehdy, what that man deserved who could behave ill to his sovereign and benefactor. "To be burnt alive," was the reply. "You are the person," said the prince; and directed him to be instantly thrown into a fire.—*Persian MS.*

‡ Hajee Ibrahim related to me the particulars of this event, in almost the same words I find them written in his history. He assured me, he did not believe the man guilty of what popular rumour accused him; and added, "From the moment this act "was committed, I lost all confidence in Lootf Aly Khan."

CHAP. XIX. Khan could ill brook the restraint under which he evidently acted: but he could not venture on an open attack of one whose influence he still dreaded; for, independent of the devoted attachment which the citizens of Shiraz were known to entertain for Hajee Ibrahim, many of the governors of provinces and the chiefs of tribes were warmly attached to his interest, and his brothers commanded the principal corps of infantry with the army. But though the prince refrained from violence, every action showed his feelings; and the minister, satisfied that his existence was at stake, determined to subvert the authority of a ruler, "from whom he had ceased," to use his own words, "to expect any thing but death *."

A. D. 1791. A. H. 1206. Lootf Aly Khan marches to Isfahan.

When affairs were in this situation, Lootf Aly Khan, who had resolved upon advancing to Isfahan, made the same arrangements for a division of authority at Shiraz, as he had done when he proceeded to Kerman: and with a chief of his own family † in charge of the garrison, and another in command of the citadel, he considered that he had nothing to fear from his minister; but still he could not avoid showing a distrust of his fidelity. After he had publicly nominated him to the charge of the civil government, when the army was on the eve of marching he sent an order to direct that his eldest son, Meerza Mahomed, should be sent to camp; where the youth, who was too young to be employed, was evidently meant to remain as a hostage for his father's conduct. If Hajee Ibrahim had before entertained doubts regarding the light in which he was viewed, they were removed by this ill-timed act of impolitic suspicion: and he appears

Hajee Ibrahim conspires against Lootf Aly Khan.

* MS. History of Hajee Ibrahim.

† Burkhoodâr was appointed, as before, to the command of the garrison and the charge of the police. Mahomed Aly Khan, Zund, had charge of the citadel.

to have decided upon the immediate execution of a plan, which he had for some time contemplated, of seizing upon Shiraz, and, by making over that city to Aga Mahomed Khan, rendering that monarch sole ruler of Persia.

Hajee Ibrahim had, perhaps, persuaded himself*, that by this act of treason he was only anticipating an event which must occur, and saving his country from the misery of a protracted war between two rival families: but there can be no doubt his real motive was that of self-preservation. He had lost all confidence in Lootf Aly Khan. He knew that he had many enemies, who were incessant in their endeavours to destroy him; and he perceived, from the conduct of the prince, that their representations had made all the impression which they could desire. Under these circumstances, he sought to preserve his life, and to place himself, by an act of signal service, under the protection of a powerful monarch. He was successful in attaining his object: but his memory is stained with the reproach of having destroyed a family to whom he owed all his advancement.

A. D. 1791. A. H. 1205. Zilhâdge.

When Lootf Aly Khan had advanced some marches on his way to Isfahan, Hajee Ibrahim, by the aid of a small corps of citizens which he had formed and placed under the command of his youngest

* In his conversations with me upon the reasons which influenced his conduct at this period, Hajee Ibrahim always declared, that a desire to save his country from the continual petty wars with which it was afflicted, was one of the principal motives. "None," said he, "except some plundering soldiers, cared whether a Zund or a Kujur "was upon the throne; but all desired that Persia should be great and powerful, and "enjoy internal tranquillity."

CHAP. XIX. brother*, seized the two noblemen† who had been left in charge of the garrison and the citadel of Shiraz; and so well were his measures taken, that this was effected without the slightest bloodshed. An account of his success was dispatched to one of his brothers‡,

A. D. 1791. A. H. 1205. 26th Zilhâdge.

with the army, which was, when the messenger arrived, encamped|| within less than twenty miles of the forces of Aga Mahomed Khan, who were commanded by the nephew of that ruler, then known by the familiar appellation of Bâbâ Khan §. The brother of Hajee Ibrahim communicated to his friends, and to the chiefs concerned in the plot, the intelligence he had received; and it was settled,

Whose troops revolt and desert him.

that, immediately after dark, some of the infantry should fire upon Lootf Aly Khan's quarters; and that this fire, accompanied by a great noise, should be the signal for the friends of Hajee Ibrahim to assemble. The moment the first shot was fired, loud shouts followed from every quarter of the camp, and bodies of men began to move. The prince, equally astonished and enraged, sent messenger after messenger to inquire the cause of the uproar. These at last returned

* Mahomed Hussein Khan.

† Burkhoodâr Khan and Mahomed Aly Khan. They were invited to a consultation on some affairs regarding the civil administration, and seized as they were seated at the hajee's house.

‡ Abdool Raheem Khan.

|| Lootf Aly Khan was encamped at a village within five fursukhs of Koomishâ, to which the troops of Aga Mahomed Khan had advanced.

§ Bâbâ Khan was the name by which the present sovereign of Persia was known till the death of his uncle. His proper name was Futteh Aly Khan: but Aga Mahomed was in the habit of terming him *Bâbâ*, or "child;" and the name continued to be given to him after he attained manhood. He was at this period twenty-two years of age.

and advised him to mount his horse and escape, as his own troops had become his enemies. None of his principal officers would attend his summons: one chief* alone, and seventy men, continued with with him. Accompanied by this small party he proceeded towards his capital, of which he was satisfied his friends still retained possession. On the second day after he left the camp, he received full information of all that had passed: but being now joined by about three hundred horsemen, he moved boldly on to the gates of Shiraz, and sent a person to demand of Hajee Ibrahim the reason of his conduct. "Inform Lootf Aly Khan," said that minister calmly to the person who waited on him, "I knew his intentions, and had no "other mode of saving my life but by depriving him of the power "to take it away. Advise him," he added, "to abandon all hope of "repossessing Shiraz, and bid him think only of saving himself by "flight†." But the proud prince, who had already been joined by a number of his troops, scorned this advice. "The traitor," said he, "after all, is but a citizen‡, and his force consists merely of a few "shopkeepers, who can never withstand brave soldiers." Supported by the expectations he expressed, he encamped near the walls of the city: but that policy which had placed the families of the soldiers of the army in the capital, now gave the greatest advantage to Hajee Ibrahim, who called upon the few troops who still adhered to their monarch to return immediately to their homes if they desired the safety of those they loved. The appeal had full effect: and the

Lootf Aly proceeds towards his capital.

Demands of Hajee Ibrahim the reason of his conduct.

Lootf Aly Khan is joined by a number of his army.

* Tâmâsp Khan Fylee.

† MS. History of Hajee Ibrahim.

‡ Shâheree, or "citizen," is used in Persia as a term of contempt, to signify unwarlike, the soldiers of that country being all men of wandering tribes.

CHAP. XIX.

But is again deserted, and proceeds to Abusheher.

Is assisted by the Governor of Bunder Reeg.

deserted Lootf Aly Khan was compelled to fly, with four or five attendants, to Abusheher. He found, however, that the shaikh of that place, who had before rendered him essential service, was no longer his friend. That chief was devoted to Hajee Ibrahim. But he met with a kind reception, and all the aid his limited means could afford, from the governor of the neighbouring Port of Bunder Reeg; and was enabled, from the support he received from him, to collect a few followers, with whom he resolved to attempt the recovery of Shiraz.

A. D. 1792. A. H. 1206.

Obtains a victory over the forces of the Shaikh of Abusheher.

Defeats the Governor of Kazeroon.

The want of numbers in the force of Lootf Aly Khan was remedied by his own heroism, and by the valour of those who adhered to his desperate fortunes. His first success was a victory over the troops of the Shaikh of Abusheher*. His next action was with the Governor of Kazeroon†, whom he made prisoner, and deprived of sight. This act of cruelty was very injurious to his interests; for while it made a powerful family his implacable enemies, it weakened that sympathy which his youth, his courage, and his misfortunes, were so calculated to excite.

Blockades the City of Shiraz.

Lootf Aly Khan, encouraged by these successes, once more appeared before Shiraz, and commenced a blockade of that city,

* This action, if such it can be termed, was fought at a village called Tangestân. The cavalry under Rezâ Kooli Khan deserted that chief and joined Lootf Aly Khan; and the Bushire infantry fled before they were attacked.—ALY REZA's *History*.

† Hajee Aly Kooli Khan of Kazeroon, who had been pardoned by Lootf Aly Khan on his ascending the throne, had been subsequently compelled to fly to Aga Mahomed Khan. His brother, Rezâ Kooli Khan, was governor, and had offended Lootf Aly Khan by plundering part of his baggage and some favourite horses when he fled from Shiraz.

CHAP. XIX.

which he was unable to besiege, as he had neither infantry nor cannon. The unsubdued spirit which he had evinced gained him many followers; and his friends began to indulge the most sanguine hopes of the re-establishment of his power. But the daring valôur and unwearied efforts of the young prince were opposed by a man, whose wisdom removed danger by measures of anticipation, and whose firmness, tempered by moderation, gave no unnecessary irritation to his enemies, while it secured the constancy and attachment of his adherents. The extraordinary character of this wonderful man was, perhaps, more fully displayed by his conduct on this critical occasion, than by any other action of his eventful life.

A. D. 1792. A. H. 1206.

After the revolt of his troops had forced Lootf Aly Khan to fly from that army with which he had hoped to conquer Isfahan in the preceding year, they had returned in a very disorderly manner to Shiraz; and their arrival had increased the number of men of the military tribes* of Fars which were within its walls to about twelve thousand. The infantry, or city militia, which was composed of the shopkeepers and artificers, did not amount to a fifth part of this number, and yet these were the only troops from whom Hajee Ibrahim could expect support; for it was impossible that tribes, whose fortunes were dependent upon the continuance of the Zund dynasty, could ever give their consent to what he intended,—the transfer of the power enjoyed by that family to the chief of the Kujurs. Satisfied that they would oppose the execution of his plan, Hajee Ibrahim resolved upon disarming, and expelling from Shiraz, this multitude of soldiers. He

Hajee Ibrahim expels the soldiery from the city.

* These are termed Eelliâts, or "tribes:" they are all soldiers, and generally horsemen. The cities furnish no soldiers to the army except infantry: they are defended by a militia, who sometimes take the field.

CHAP. XIX. took his measures with a precaution and promptitude which eluded all suspicion. Having given orders to secure the streets which communicated by a back road from the place of his residence to the gateway of the city, he sent notice to the military tribes to be ready, at an appointed time, to receive a donation which he meant to give them. They assembled as directed, and one hundred* were admitted at a time into the interior court of his mansion. From the height of the walls which surrounded it, those who were without could know nothing of what was passing within. The first party admitted found themselves surrounded, but were told no injury was intended to them if they resigned their arms; which they did: and while these were given to citizens, to increase the corps upon whom Hajee Ibrahim could depend, the unarmed soldiers were conducted, by the back road before mentioned, beyond the gates of the town. The whole were disarmed, and party after party joined their astonished companions under the walls. However extraordinary it may appear, this measure was carried into execution without confusion, and without bloodshed. When the whole body were expelled, they were directed to proceed to some villages in the vicinity. Being deprived of the power of resistance, they were forced to obey. Some of them joined Lootf Aly Khan; and others remained at their places of destination, watching the progress of events.

Hajee Ibrahim wrote to Aga Mahomed Khan the moment he had seized Shiraz; and that chief sent one of his generals† with a strong detachment to his support: but Lootf Aly Khan took the

* Some accounts say only fifty: the difference is of little consequence.

† Moostâphâ Khan.

first opportunity of attacking this corps, which, after a severe contest, he defeated. Aga Mahomed, alarmed at the intelligence of this success, ordered a force* to Shiraz, which he conceived, from its superior numbers, must terminate the war. This body, after being joined by the troops in garrison, marched to attack Lootf Aly Khan, whose small army they outnumbered more than ten to one†. The brave prince, however, did not decline the combat, but left the entrenchments with which he had fortified his camp, and drew his men up in some gardens, with the double object of occupying a strong position, and concealing his numbers from observation. The action was, at its commencement, favourable to his enemies, who drove his men from their position, and pursued them some distance beyond it: but Lootf Aly Khan, who possessed eminent talents as a commander, observed that they had commenced to plunder the camp which he had abandoned; and, judging the opportunity favourable, he made a resolute and successful charge with a body of horse whom he had rallied. His repulsed troops, encouraged by the gallantry of their chief, returned to the charge, and the enemy gave way in every quarter. The victory was complete; and it was rendered more decisive from one of the principal leaders ‡ of the Kujur army being among the prisoners who were taken on this day by the Zund prince.

CHAP. XIX.

Lootf Aly Khan defeats a party of Aga Mahomed Khan's troops.

A. D. 1792. A. H. 1206.

Attacks another body of troops.

And completely defeats them.

Hajee Ibrahim, who perceived in these recurring successes a dangerous increase of reputation to Lootf Aly Khan, wrote to Aga Mahomed, urging him to advance in person to Shiraz. That

* He gave the command of this force to Jân Mahomed Khan and Rezâ Kooli Khan.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ The name of this general was Rezâ Kooli Khan.

CHAP. XIX.

Aga Mahomed Khan advances with a large army. A. D. 1792. A. H. 1206.

monarch, quite sensible of the importance of the crisis, moved, with a large force *, towards that city. Though his numbers exceeded those of his enemy in a proportion of nearly a hundred to one, he appears to have proceeded with a caution which proved that he thought there was much to apprehend from the bold enterprise of his enemy : nor was he mistaken. When he had arrived at a village † near the celebrated ruins of Persepolis, his camp was suddenly attacked by Lootf Aly Khan ; who, animated with a courage equal to that of any of the heroes who had ever feasted in those halls near which he fought, had determined to make one great struggle for the crown of Persia. He was successful in surprising the advanced guard of Aga Mahomed Khan's army, which he defeated ; and, accompanying the fugitives to their camp with a band of only a few hundred men, he attacked upwards of thirty thousand. The darkness of the night, the fears that were communicated by those who had fled from the advance, and the terror of his name, created a dismay and confusion which, at one period, promised complete success ‡. Almost the whole of Aga Mahomed Khan's army dispersed ; and the assailants had arrived at the royal quarters, when a chief, who had joined Lootf Aly Khan, assured him that the Kujur monarch was among the fugitives, and entreated that he would

Lootf Aly Khan defeats his advanced guard, and attacks the main body.

Conceives the victory complete.

* Some authors state that he had forty thousand men ; but this number is an exaggeration.

† The name of this village is Mâyen. It is at the distance of about sixty miles from Shiraz, and thirty-one from Persepolis. Aga Mahomed reached this encampment on the fourteenth of Shâwâl, in the year of the Hejirah 1206.

‡ He killed the leader, Ibrahim Khan, and a great number of his party : they were posted in the pass between the villages of Mâyen and Alburz.

not lose the wealth he had so nobly won, by permitting his followers to plunder the jewels and treasures of an empire*. This chief† was unfortunately believed. Lootf Aly Khan directed his men to halt, and not to enter the royal pavilion: they obeyed, but dispersed to plunder in other directions. When that morning dawned which was to have beheld him a conqueror, he heard, with dismay, the public crier in the enemy's camp call to prayers‡; which announced to those that remained of Aga Mahomed Khan's army that their sovereign was at his post. He had never left it: and when he found it impossible to remedy the confusion into which his troops were thrown, he had remained stationary at his quarters, surrounded by some of his guards, expecting, from the small numbers of the enemy, and their want of discipline, the very event which had occurred. Lootf Aly Khan, awakened from his dream of victory, found himself, compelled to fly, with all the speed he could, to save himself from being made prisoner.

Is disappointed, and compelled to make his escape.

This daring attempt of Lootf Aly Khan to recover his power ought not to be deemed an act of desperate temerity, in which success was impossible. That prince well knew from experience, that in an army composed like the one which he attacked, confusion, if once introduced, was likely to become irremediable. He also knew, that in the actual state of Persia the minds of a number of chiefs of tribes fluctuated between him and Aga Mahomed Khan.

* Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

† The name of this chief was Meerza Futteh Ullah Ardillanee. Some historians declare that he was sincere in his report; others assert that he was the emissary of the crafty Aga Mahomed Khan.

‡ This is never done except when the king commands in person.

CHAP. XIX. These leaders, it was obvious, from recent occurrences, always acted upon the impulse of the moment: and as the part they took was blindly adopted by their followers, he had a right to expect that brilliant success would turn the tide in his favour, and that he should be able to overcome his enemies with the very means they had collected for his destruction. The plan of the attack was able: he proceeded with every caution, and completely surprised the advance corps of his enemy. The advantage he took of this first success showed at once his skill and his determined courage. Victory was snatched from him by one of those accidents which have so often decided the fate of battles and of empires.

If Lootf Aly Khan deserved success, Aga Mahomed Khan had also merited the crown which the result of this day fixed upon his brow. He had evinced, amid a scene of consternation and confusion, all that calm resolution and self-possession which marked his extraordinary character. His mind loved to dwell upon the events of this period: and we are told he used often to observe, that in the modern History of Persia three achievements alone were worthy of being transmitted to posterity*. First, the policy and firmness of Hajee Ibrahim, who, aided by a few shopkeepers, took and maintained for months the City of Shiraz against all the warlike tribes of that province. Secondly, the daring heroism of Lootf Aly Khan, who, with four or five hundred men, ventured to attack an army of thirty thousand; and, lastly, that fortitude which he himself had displayed, by remaining at his quarters when all around him fled; and that calmness in danger which made him direct

* Persian MS.

CHAP. XIX.

the common crier to announce morning prayers in the usual manner, that both his own army and that of his enemy might learn he was at his post, and undisturbed by all that had passed.

Lootf Aly Khan collects followers in Kerman. A. D. 1792. A. H. 1206. 18th Shâwâl.

The flight of Lootf Aly Khan was continued till he reached the province of Kerman, where he began again to collect followers: but Aga Mahomed Khan, who had marched to Shiraz, instantly sent an army * to attack him; and the few men who had joined him dispersed, evidently considering his fortunes as quite desperate. The deserted prince fled to Khorassan †, which, since the death of Nâdir Shah, had remained subject to a number of independent chiefs. One of these, Meer Hussein Khan, who ruled over the city and district of Tubbus, offered his protection to the royal fugitive; who, on learning that the jealous policy of Aga Mahomed Khan had destroyed the fortifications of Shiraz, determined to make another effort to reconquer that city. The chief of Tubbus furnished him with two hundred men; with whom, and a few faithful followers who had never forsaken him, he marched towards Yezd. The governor ‡ of that city sent a corps to oppose his progress, which Lootf Aly Khan attacked with his usual impetuosity, and defeated. Elated with this success, his small force advanced rapidly upon the village of Aberkoh, which stands on the verge of the province of Fars. This place submitted to his authority; and from it he proclaimed to his friends that he was once more in the field. He had still numbers of secret adherents, and the exaggerated reports which were spread of his suc-

His troops disperse.

Lootf Aly Khan escapes to Khorassan, and receives aid from the chief of Tubbus.

A. D. 1793. A. H. 1207.

Defeats a body of troops

* The cavalry of this force was commanded by Wullee Mahomed Khan, Kujur, and the infantry by Abdool Raheem Khan, brother to Hajee Ibrahim.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ Aly Nuckee Khan.

CHAP. XIX.

cess induced many of these to declare openly in his favour. In a short time his numbers were increased to fifteen hundred men, with which he was encouraged to lay siege to Darabjird. This celebrated town, though fallen from its former greatness, is still a place of some consequence, and contains from ten to fifteen thousand inhabitants. The importance of such a conquest led Lootf Aly Khan to make every effort for its reduction: but the alarm excited by his reappearance at the head of an army had spread to Teheran, and a large force was sent against him under the command of a noble* of the Kujur tribe, while Hajee Ibrahim detached his youngest brother † with a strong corps of infantry to reinforce the garrison of Darabjird ‡. The approach of these troops compelled Lootf Aly Khan to raise the siege, and retreat. He endeavoured to make a stand at a fortified village ‖; but, after some days' skirmishing, he was obliged to hazard an action, in which the superior numbers of his enemies prevailed, and he was compelled once more to seek the protection of the ruler of Tubbus. That chief, however, though he received him kindly, began to entertain apprehensions that his friendship, though it could not save his guest, might involve him in his fall. Influenced by this consideration, he advised Lootf Aly to proceed to Candahar, and seek the aid of Timour Shah, the reigning monarch of the Affghans, who alone possessed the power of restoring him to the throne of his ancestors. The prince acquiesced in the wisdom of this advice, and actually set out on his journey to the court of the

Lays siege to Darabjird.

A. D. 1794. A. H. 1208.

Raises the siege, and retreats.

Is defeated.

Seeks the protection of the ruler of Tubbus.

Proceeds towards Candahar.

* The name of this leader was Mahomed Hussein Khan, Kujur.

† Mahomed Hussein Khan. ‡ Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‖ The name of this fortified village was Rooneez.

Affghan king; but he had proceeded only a few marches, when he heard of Timour Shah's death, and the intelligence led him to abandon the design he had entertained of leaving Persia.

The death of Timour Shah induces him to return.

While the mind of Lootf Aly Khan hesitated on the course he should next pursue, he received letters from two chiefs of Nermansheer *, the eastern district of Kerman, entreating him not to abandon his country, and pledging themselves, if he would return, to give him every support in their power †. A Persian author has truly remarked, that "the slightest spark always rekindled the flame "of hope in the breast of this warrior." He hastened to Nermansheer; and, encouraged by seeing a few soldiers again assembled around his standard, he formed the daring resolution of making himself master of the City of Kerman. Having approached it by rapid marches, he directed his brave uncle, Abdûllâ Khan, who was the most distinguished of all those that had adhered to his fortunes, to advance with half his force, and make a false attack upon the town. He kept the remainder in reserve; and when he saw that the attention of the enemy was wholly occupied by the corps with Abdûllâ, he led the troops under his immediate command to another part of the fort; and, being furnished with scaling ladders, they had mounted the walls before they were perceived. The garrison, though surprised, made an obstinate resistance, but were ultimately driven from all their posts, and obliged to take shelter in the citadel; and even that they were soon compelled to abandon. The officers ‡ who commanded in Kerman effected

He is prevailed on by the chiefs of Nermansheer not to leave Persia

A. D. 1794.
A. H. 1208.

Attacks the City of Kerman.

Which he takes by assault.

* The names of these chiefs were Mahomed Khan and Jehangheer Khan.

† Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

‡ These were Mahomed Hussein Khan Karagoozoloo, the present chief of that tribe, and Abdool Raheem Khan, the brother of Hajee Ibrahim.

CHAP. XIX.

Assumes the style of a sovereign.

their escape; but a great number of their men were slain, and the whole of the baggage fell into the hands of their conquerors. Lootf Aly Khan once more assumed the style of a sovereign; and coins were struck in his name, to commemorate this last of his glorious achievements. The historian* of his reign, when speaking of this event, emphatically observes, "that the fortune of this prince, like "the splendour of the meteor which he resembled, shone brightest "at the moment of its close."

Aga Mahomed Khan hastens to Kerman.

Aga Mahomed Khan, when he heard of the fall of Kerman, marched, with all the force he could collect, to encounter a foe, who seemed to rise greater from every misfortune. Lootf Aly Khan was not dismayed by the vast superiority of numbers that came against him; and his soldiers were encouraged, by some partial successes, to second his heroic ardour: but after the siege had lasted four months, they began to suffer great distress, and several corps became discontented. One body of infantry, which had charge of some towers, gave them up to the enemy, and between two and three thousand of Aga Mahomed Khan's troops had entered before the information of this treachery reached Lootf Aly Khan. The moment he heard of it, he hastened to the spot, and succeeded, after a severe contest, in repulsing the enemy †: but this was his last success. One of the chiefs ‡ in whom the gallant prince had most confided determined to betray him. The traitor had charge of the citadel, which joined in one part with the outworks of the town. He opened the gates at this entrance; and Aga Mahomed Khan introduced between ten and twelve thousand men,

And lays siege to that city.
A. D. 1795.
A. H. 1210.

* Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family. † Ibid.

‡ Nujuff Kooli Khan of Khorassan.

and prepared to support them with his whole army. Lootf Aly Khan, when he heard of this second act of treachery, hoped that his efforts might be again successful, and attacked them with the most determined valour, but in vain: their numbers were too great, and he was obliged to retire, after seeing the bravest of his followers either slain or put to flight.

Aga Mahomed Khan, whose principal object was to prevent the escape of Lootf Aly, had surrounded Kerman, and had posted a strong body of men opposite every gateway. The young prince, though beset on all sides, maintained the contest in the town during three hours; and at night he crossed the ditch by a small bridge made of loose planks, which were removed the moment they had served the purpose for which they were placed *. The lines of the enemy were yet to be passed. He threw himself upon them with a courage that derived energy from despair, and, accompanied by three attendants, succeeded in breaking through the troops by whom he was opposed. He fled in the direction of Nermansheer, and reached that district in safety.

Lootf Aly Khan is compelled to fly.

Reaches Nermansheer.

When day dawned, and Aga Mahomed found, to use a Persian phrase, that "the lion had burst his toils," he wreaked † his vengeance

Aga Mahomed Khan orders the massacre of the inhabitants.

* Aly Rezâ's History of the Zund Family.

† I find in one of my manuscripts a remarkable anecdote of Aga Mahomed Khan's conduct on this occasion. The meerza or secretary of Lootf Aly was made prisoner, and brought before him. He demanded, how he had dared to write firmauns, or mandates, to him who was a sovereign? "I wrote them," (said the man,) "by the order "of my master, Lootf Aly; and my fear of him when present," (he added,) "was "greater than my dread of you who were at a distance."—"Strike off his hands, and "take out his eyes!" exclaimed the enraged monarch. The savage order was instantly obeyed. Next day he sent for the son of the man he had so inhumanly treated.

CHAP. XIX. upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the City of Kerman: nearly twenty thousand women and children were granted as slaves to his soldiers; and all the males who had reached maturity were commanded to be put to death, or to be deprived of their eye-sight. Those who escaped his cruelty, owed their safety neither to mercy nor to flight, but to the fatigue of their executioners, who only ceased to be the instruments of glutting the revengeful spirit of their enraged monarch, when they were themselves exhausted with the work of blood. The numbers that were slain upon this memorable occasion were great, and exceeded even those who were deprived of sight; though the latter are said to have amounted to seven thousand *. Many of these miserable wretches are still alive. Some, who subsist on charity †, wander over Persia, and recount, to all who will listen to the tale, the horrors of this day of calamity.

"Tell your father," (said he,) "that the prophet has upbraided me in a dream for my "cruel usage of him: what can I do to repair the injuries I have done?"—"He will "desire, if he lives," (said the youth,) "to pass the remainder of his days at the tomb "of the holy Aly, at Nujuff." The king immediately directed that mules, tents, and every necessary equipment, should be furnished for his journey. He also sent him a present of three hundred tomâns, (about three hundred pounds sterling,) and entreated the young man to solicit his father to forgive him, and to remember him in his prayers.

* I follow the MS. of a contemporary writer. When I have asked any of the chiefs who were present at this massacre how many men were deprived of sight, their answer was always the same: "Many thousands." It has been stated, that Aga Mahomed Khan directed that a number of pounds weight of eyes should be brought him: nor is the tale in the least incredible.

† When at Shiraz on the fourth of June 1800, I thought that the best mode in which I could celebrate the birth-day of our beloved monarch was to distribute alms to the poor: a great number assembled, and among them were more than a hundred men whose eyes had been taken out at Kerman.

CHAP. XIX.

Lootf Aly Khan was at first kindly received by the Governor of Nermansheer; but that chief inquired anxiously after his brother, who had accompanied the prince to Kerman *: he was told that he would soon arrive: but three days, passed in anxious expectation, satisfied his mind, that he was, if alive, in the power of Aga Mahomed Khan; and he naturally concluded that his fate would be decided by the conduct he pursued upon this trying occasion. His love for his brother, and his fears for his own safety, silenced the dictates of honour and of good faith: he determined to seize his royal guest, and to offer him as a ransom for the life and pardon of one who was dearer to him. The companions of Lootf Aly discovered this plot the moment before its execution: they hastened to inform him, and entreated he would escape; but their advice was disregarded; nor was he awakened from his dream of security by seeing those † who had remained faithful in every danger abandon him as one who had resolved not to avoid death. Soon after their departure, the approach of a party of armed men convinced him that the information which he had contemned was too true. He grasped his sword, and rushed upon those who were advancing to seize him. A momentary terror prevailed; and the prince was already on the back of his favourite

The conduct of the Governor of Nermansheer.
A. D. 1795.
A. H. 1210.

Who determines to seize Lootf Aly Khan.

He is apprised of it, but refuses to escape

Is surrounded.

* Aly Reza's History of the Zund Family.

† One of the persons who were with him upon this occasion, and whose name was Khodah-buksh, fled to India. He afterwards obtained a small command of horse in the service of the Nizam of the Deckan, and was attached to a party that served under me in the campaign of 1799 against Seringapatam. The account he gave of the life of Lootf Aly Khan, and of his conduct upon this occasion, exactly corresponds with that of the historian, Aly Rezâ.

CHAP. XIX. horse*, when one of the assailants made a blow with his sabre at the legs of the noble animal, and brought him to the ground. Lootf Aly Khan started up again, and renewed an unequal contest, in which he at last fell, having received two severe wounds, one upon his arm, and the other upon his head. In this state he was carried to the camp of Aga Mahomed Khan. The page of history would be stained† by a recital of the indignities which were offered to the royal captive when brought to the presence of his cruel and implacable enemy. Suffice it to observe, that his eyes were torn out, and that he was sent a prisoner to Teheran, to languish out a miserable and protracted existence, far from his native province, and from all those to whom his name was dear: but the fears of his conqueror made him at last humane; and an order was sent to put a period to the life of a prince, who, even in the wretched state to which he had been reduced, was still an object of dread‡ to the proudest and most powerful of his enemies.

Is severely wounded, and carried before Aga Mahomed Khan.

A. D. 1795. A. H. 1209.

Is sent a prisoner to Teheran.

Is slain.

* The name of this horse was Kurrund. He was of the Arabian blood, but bred in Persia. Though a low horse, his activity and strength were wonderful; and credibility is staggered with the accounts which all Persians concur in giving of his speed, and of the extraordinary distance which he at different times carried his royal master, who regarded and treated him with the greatest affection and care.

† The brutal insults offered to Lootf Aly when he was carried before Aga Mahomed are too shocking to be described. The English reader would revolt from the narration of a scene which disgraced human nature.

‡ Though Aga Mahomed Khan cherished the most implacable resentment against all the Zund family, and particularly this prince, he, nevertheless, admired his character. We are told, that some time before he took Kerman, he received accounts that his nephew and heir, the present king, had several sons born to him in one night. "May "God grant," said Aga Mahomed, "that one of them may resemble Lootf Aly "Khan!"—*Persian MS.*

CHAP. XIX.

His character.

Lootf Aly Khan terminated his extraordinary career before he was twenty-five years of age. There is in the character of this young prince, and in the events of his life, that which must excite both pity and admiration: but, amid the blaze of his achievements, we can discover nothing but the qualities of a soldier. Had he been born to the undisputed sovereignty of a large kingdom at a period when allegiance to the reigning prince was at once a habit and a principle, his fame might have emulated that of a Chenghiz, or a Timour. But in the condition of his country at the time he succeeded to the throne, every quality he possessed (except his personal valour, and his ability as a leader,) was against him. He had knowledge without prudence; and his judgment was subdued by his passions. His pride was extreme; and, even when his fortune was at the lowest, he scorned to use any efforts to conciliate or attach those whom he considered himself born to command. He was violent and unrelenting, and never tried to conquer by other means than by fear; and wherever success favoured him, he used his power with a severity which might have strengthened an established ruler, but which could have no effect but that of creating enemies to one who, like him, was always struggling against the stream of adversity. But his faults, which were numerous, have been forgotten by his countrymen, who speak only of the manly beauty, the elevated courage, and the cruel destiny, of the last prince of the family of Kurreem Khan.

The princes of the Zund dynasty ruled over a great part of Persia for nearly half a century; but, from the death of their founder, Kurreem Khan, their power had never possessed any stability. This is, in the first place, to be attributed to their internal divisions; and,

CHAP. XIX. in the second, to the genius of their enemy, Aga Mahomed Khan. That monarch had, from the hour he fled from Shiraz, laboured incessantly to destroy them; and his task was now completed. He owed this triumph more to his foresight and perseverance, than to any brilliant successes of his arms. His present object was to prevent the claims of those he had subdued ever being revived: almost every person* who could have formed the most remote pretensions, from his birth, to the throne, was put to death, or deprived of sight; and not only the tribe of Zund, but all those who had been the active supporters of the family of Kurreem Khan, were removed from the province of Fars into the most distant quarters of the kingdom. It has been before mentioned, that the native tribes of Persia had been encouraged by that monarch to assert the superiority which had belonged, in former days, to their ancestors. Their efforts had been successful; and they had, for a short period, enjoyed power: but their use of it had not been such as to lead the more peaceable inhabitants of Persia to regret their downfal. This race of men were brave and warlike; but the habits of long subjection had rendered them even more rude and barbarous than those who rose to fortune upon their ruins.

* Abdûllâ Khan, the uncle of Lootf Aly Khan, was, I believe, the only exception. He had married the sister of Hajee Aly Kooli Khan of Kazeroon, and his pardon was granted in consideration of that chief, for whom Aga Mahomed Khan had great regard and respect.

CHAPTER XX.

An Account of the State of Persia, and of the Neighbouring Nations, at the Period of the Establishment of the Power of Aga Mahomed Khan, the Founder of the Reigning Family.

BEFORE we proceed to give the history of the family which now occupies the throne of Persia, a chapter must be devoted to a review of the actual condition of that kingdom, and of the neighbouring states, at the moment that Aga Mahomed Khan overcame the last prince of the Zund dynasty. By referring to the situation in which the provinces of the empire then were, and to that of adjoining countries, we shall better understand the progress which the reigning dynasty have made to establish their power, and to restore Persia to that rank which it once held among Asiatic nations.

Provinces under the actual rule of Aga Mahomed Khan at the death of Lootf Aly Khan.

At the death of Lootf Aly Khan, we may pronounce that Aga Mahomed Khan was the actual, as well as acknowledged, sovereign of the provinces of Asterabad, of Mazenderan, of Ghilan, of the whole of Irak, of Fars, and of Kerman. The situation of these countries, which extend from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, could only be deemed settled and obedient by a comparison of their condition to Khorassan, and other parts of

CHAP. XX. the empire, which had been broken into a number of petty principalities at the death of Nâdir Shah; and had, subsequent to that event, thrown off their allegiance to those rulers who assumed the title of sovereigns of Persia.

Character of the contests between chiefs of tribes, from the death of Kurreem Khan to the accession of Aga Mahomed Khan.

The territories which were at this period under the rule of Aga Mahomed Khan had enjoyed tranquillity during the latter years of the reign of Kurreem Khan, but since his death they had become a scene of continual contests. Though the efforts to obtain the crown had been limited to the descendants of that prince, and their enemy, Aga Mahomed Khan, the necessity which each pretender had in his turn experienced for the support of the chiefs of tribes, had elevated that class into a consequence much beyond what they had ever before possessed. The events which have been related, show that the attachment of these chiefs to the cause they had adopted was seldom to be depended upon. It rested upon no honourable basis; and defection, from being common, had almost ceased to be considered as disgraceful. A selfish feeling had taken place of that spirit of loyalty for which the nobles of Persia were once distinguished, and their descendants showed, even in action, a cautious prudence, which rendered their courage as equivocal as their faith. The greatest of those engagements which the native historians of this period describe, deserve no other name than that of trifling skirmishes. When the armies met, a few men (generally of the tribe of the ruler for whom they fought) attacked each other with all the ardour of inveterate hostility. The other tribes almost always kept aloof till they saw one or other of these parties prevail; and then, if they did not betray their leader, they joined in flight, or pursuit, according to the issue of

the first contest. In many of these bloodless battles *, though there were twenty or thirty thousand on each side, not more than fifteen or twenty were killed, and perhaps double the number wounded. This fact alone sufficiently accounts for those extraordinary victories which the personal valour of a leader, and a few brave adherents, often obtained over the most superior numbers.

Though some of the chiefs of tribes were compelled to place their families at the capital of the ruler they served, where they were guarded as hostages for their fidelity, others (and among them the most powerful) had lodged both their wives and children, and the wealth they had accumulated during this period of plunder, in their native towns or villages, which they had fortified on the plea of providing against the predatory attacks of their enemies, but with the real view of rendering themselves in some degree independent of the caprice and power of their sovereign.

Efforts made by Aga Mahomed Khan to unite the chiefs of his own tribe.

The condition of the military nobles, or rather feudal lords, of Persia, was not favourable to the designs of Aga Mahomed Khan: but that politic prince had succeeded in uniting the efforts of his own tribe, all of whom were devoted to his cause. To effect this object, he had made what were deemed the greatest sacrifices. He had forgiven, as has been stated, when he had the power to revenge it, the blood of his father and of his uncles, and had pardoned the grossest personal insults which had been offered to himself when in captivity. His magnanimity was rewarded by the unanimous support of his

* I have had an opportunity of becoming well acquainted with many of the principal chiefs and leaders who were actors in these scenes, and they all agreed in the account which they gave of the character of the warfare that had been carried on in Persia since the death of Nâdir Shah.

CHAP. XX.

tribe; and, in the condition in which Persia then was, he derived the greatest strength from their fidelity and attachment.

Asterabad had long been the residence of the Kujur chiefs: it was impossible, from its situation, at a distant corner of the empire, ever to make it the capital: but many reasons combined to render Aga Mahomed Khan desirous of being near the hereditary possessions of his family, and to the pasture lands of those Turkish tribes on which he was in a great degree dependent for maintaining the crown he had acquired. He determined, therefore, to fortify Teheran, which stands immediately at the base of that lofty range of mountains which divide Irak from Mazenderan. The fortifications of Isfahan and Shiraz were dismantled. Those of Kerman* had also been razed to the ground; and the inhabitants of these cities, harassed with the sieges they had sustained, saw, without sorrow, the progress of the work of demolition: and though some of the military classes might have sighed after their lost power, and regretted that their harvest of plunder was over, the other inhabitants of those provinces that were now subject to Aga Mahomed Khan's rule, were quite prepared, by past scenes, to welcome the establishment of any government which promised, from its stability, to afford them an effectual and permanent protection.

Makes Teheran the capital, and demolishes other strong places.

* This city had, at a former period, been one of the richest and most populous in Persia. When the European factories were established at Gombroon, it became a great emporium of trade between Europe and India, and the countries of Persia, Cabul, and Tartary. The province of which it is the capital was not productive; but it boasted some rare articles of commerce, particularly the celebrated wool of its goats, which approaches nearer than any other, in fineness, to that of Cashmere.

The ancient province of Carduchia, (the modern Kurdistan,) which is bounded to the east by the plains of Irak and Aderbijan, to the west by the River Tigris, to the north by Armenia, and to the south by the territories of Bagdad, had, in former ages, as at present, always maintained its own rude government *; and, though its mountain chiefs had generally acknowledged the authority of a paramount lord, they had for ages enjoyed more real independence than those of any other province in this quarter of Asia. We have evidence of this fact in the page of Xenophon †; which informs us, that in the very earliest periods of the history of Persia the chiefs of Kurdistan were disobedient and turbulent vassals to the most powerful of its monarchs. There are, indeed, some grounds to believe that it was the valour of this race which emancipated their country from the foreign rule of the successors of Alexander.

CHAP. XX.

An account of the province of Kurdistan.

For a short time the legions of Rome had occupied a part of Carduchia, but they had probably possession of little more than their military positions: and it is remarkable, that none of the numerous Tartar tribes who have overrun Persia, have ever per-

* A Kurdish writer, in his preface to a history of his native country, states, that authors differ regarding the origin of the Kurds. Some believe them to be descended from those persons who were saved from the cruelty of Zohauk. Others trace them to the jin, or genii; while many state, that the deeves, or demons, connected themselves with women of the earth, and begot the Kurds.—*Tuarikh Akhârâd*, by SHERRIFF-U-DEEN.

† The prisoners informed Xenophon, that the Carduchians, who inhabited the mountains along the Tigris, through which he desired to march, " were a warlike " nation, and not subject to the king: and that once the king's army, consisting of one " hundred and twenty thousand men, penetrated into their country, whence not one of " them returned, the roads being hardly passable."—SPELLMAN's *Cyrus*, page 111.

CHAP. XX. manently established themselves in this province*, which is still inhabited by an original and rude race; who, though they have departed from the religion, maintain the usages and habits of their forefathers, and speak a barbarous dialect of the ancient language of Persia.

The causes which have enabled this people to preserve their soil† from strangers are obvious. Their country is mountainous and barren; and the few beautiful and fertile valleys, which are interspersed among its clustering hills, offer no adequate temptation to reward the effort that would be necessary to its complete reduction: for its warlike and robust inhabitants are singularly attached to their native land; and the conquest of their rugged mountains would be found as difficult to make, as it would prove unprofitable to maintain. This race of men have never been united‡ under

* There are some Arabian tribes in this country; and several of the principal Kurdish chiefs boast a descent from families of that nation.

† The historian of Kurdistan includes all the province of Laristan in that country; which, according to him, extends to the Persian Gulf. The same author states, that Kurd signifies "valiant;" and that Roostum, though born in Seistan, was of a Kurdish family. He says, that the common reading of Roostum-e-Goord, in Ferdosi, is erroneous, and that it should be Roostum-e-Kurd, or Roostum the Kurd.—*Tuarikh Akhârâd*, by SHERRIFF-U-DEEN.

‡ We are told by Greek historians, that when Artaxerxes Longimanus entered their country with an immense army, he was only saved from destruction by one of his allies fomenting a division between the two great rulers of Carduchia, that led to their consenting to a peace with that monarch. Sherriff-u-deen, in his history of this nation, asserts, that when an envoy from a chief of Kurdistan came before Mahomed, the prophet was so struck by his fierce looks and gigantic frame of body, that he prayed to God that so formidable a race should never be united: and hence (this pious author concludes) those divisions, which have ever since continued to distract that country.

one ruler: and perhaps this circumstance, which, had they possessed a more inviting country, must have soon led to their subjugation, has been one of the causes which has enabled them to preserve their independence. Their chiefs, constantly at war with each other, have always sought the protection of some great power, whose influence, or occasional aid, enabled them to preserve or increase their territories. They have repaid the support they received by the acknowledgment of the monarch who granted it as their paramount sovereign: and, as such, they have discharged the obligation they had incurred, sometimes by tribute, and sometimes by military service. We are not surprised to find that their most powerful neighbours have preferred the professions of allegiance and real aid, which they have received from the petty rulers of Kurdistan, to the hazard of an attempt to subdue them into more complete submission. The situation of their country, which has generally been the frontier that divided great empires, has been favourable to the policy of its chiefs: and we may conclude, that in ancient days these vacillated between the Emperors of Rome and the Monarchs of the Sassanian dynasty, in the same manner as they do at this moment between the Kings of Persia and the Emperors of Turkey.

The districts of Kurdistan which lie near the Tigris and in the vicinity of Bagdad, admit the supremacy of the Turkish government*; while those that are situated more to the northward and eastward profess to be under the protection of the King of Persia.

* The largest half of Kurdistan at present term themselves subjects of the Turkish empire, which they prefer to Persia, as it is at this moment less able to coerce the payment of tribute, or to exact military service.

CHAP. XX. Among the latter chiefs, the Waly, or Prince of Ardelân *, is by far the most powerful. His territories, which border on Irak and Aderbijan, are nearly two hundred miles in length, and about one hundred and sixty in breadth. The revenues of this tract are not great; but its princes, who maintain almost regal state, boast their descent from the celebrated Salladin †. Their title, however, to this honour is not clearly made out; but the history of their country proves that the government of this province has continued in the same noble family for a period of more than four centuries. The patriarchal character of their rule, and the cheerful obedience of their subjects, are calculated to make the inhabitants of the rich plains of Persia envy the lot of those of the rugged mountains of Kurdistan: but, though the Kings of Persia have seldom interfered with the internal administration of Ardelân, and have never attempted to set aside the family who govern it, they have often exerted their influence and power to alter the direct line of succession; and, by supporting the pretensions of junior branches,

* The town of Sennah, the capital of Ardelân, lies in latitude 35° 12′ N., and longitude 40° E., and is distant sixty miles from Hamadan. It is pleasantly situated in a small valley, encircled by mountains. I encamped at it for several days in the autumn of 1810, and was entertained in the most hospitable and princely manner by the ruling Waly, Amân-ûllâh Khan, the son of Khoosroo Khan, who was Waly at the period of which I am writing.

† This is the name which European writers give to Sâlâh-û-deen, the famous enemy of the crusaders. The family of Ardelân trace their lineage to this monarch through female descent; but, in the History of Kurdistan, their title to their possessions rests upon an actual occupation for four centuries, and a succession of twenty-five male heirs.

they have obtained their object of creating feuds, which have rendered its rulers more dependent upon their power.

Khoosroo Khan, who at the period of Lootf Aly Khan's death was Waly of Ardelân, had professed allegiance to Kurreem Khan; but he withdrew his support from the descendants of that prince, and became the open enemy of Jaaffer Khan, whose nephew Ismail* had fled to Sennah, and thrown himself upon his protection. The defeat which Jaaffer Khan sustained near Hamadan, was chiefly ascribed to the valour of the troops of Ardelân; and as their chief could not hope, after such an event, to effect a reconciliation with that ruler, he was led, by considerations of policy, to attach himself to the cause of Aga Mahomed †, to whom he sent all the arms, and other trophies, which he had taken in this action, as a proof of his acknowledgment of his paramount power. From that moment, Khoosroo became one of the most powerful supporters of the Kujur monarch: and the latter, when he overcame the Zund dynasty, had a right to expect that the continued allegiance of the Waly of Ardelân would ensure the submission of all those districts of Kurdistan which had formerly acknowledged the supremacy of the King of Persia.

State of the north-eastern provinces of Armenia.

The family of the Princes of Armenia had been extinct for centuries: and that disunited province could hardly be deemed

* In the history of this family, which I obtained from the reigning Waly, it is stated, that Khoosroo never meant to support Ismail Khan, till the suspicions and intended hostility of Jaaffer Khan forced him to that measure.

† Khoosroo Khan, when very young, had been expelled from his territories, and deprived of his birth-right. He owed his restoration to power to Mahomed Hussein Khan, the father of Aga Mahomed, and was led, by that event, to entertain a partiality to a family from whose aid he had derived such great benefit.

CHAP. XX. entitled to the continuance of a name, which had long described a country inhabited by a brave and independent people. The greatest part of it had fallen under the rule of the Turkish government; but the north-eastern districts, which stretched along the banks of the Araxes *, and intervened between Aderbijan and Georgia, had been in general subject to the sovereigns of Persia. The chiefs by whom these districts were governed had, at no period, possessed a power which could enable them to resist the authority of an established monarch of that kingdom.

Condition of the province of Georgia.

The fine province of Georgia, — which is bounded to the north by the high ranges of the Caucausus; to the east, by the lofty mountains of Dâghestân and Shirwan; and to the west and south, by the districts of ancient Armenia, — was governed by a Waly, or prince, who usually acknowledged the Sovereign of Persia as his paramount lord. This province boasts a singular salubrity of climate; and is alike famous for the abundant fertility of its soil, the luxuriance of its diversified scenes, of rich plains, clear streams, and wooded mountains, and the superior courage and beauty of its inhabitants: but, for many centuries, all these apparent blessings had operated as curses to this charming region. Its inhabitants, who had continued to profess the Christian religion, were, from the situation of their country, which lay between two great Mahomedan nations, Turkey and Persia, subject to a violence and oppression, which had sunk their character to the lowest state of degradation. Independent of the evil resulting from this cause, the internal government of Georgia was bad. The power of the Waly was not only checked by

* This river is now called the Arras.

the divisions which his neighbours always fomented in his own family, but by the great authority possessed by his insubordinate nobles, who exercised, in their respective districts, the most despotic tyranny over their miserable vassals. In a country so situated, the richness of the soil only produced indolence. Men would not labour beyond what was necessary for their mere subsistence; and that the earth yielded almost spontaneously. The manly form and courage of the male, and the beauty and vivacity of the female youth of Georgia, made their Mahomedan neighbours always anxious to obtain them as slaves. As they lived in misery at home, and often attained the highest ranks* among other nations, even parents did not hesitate to sell their offspring. Nobles made offerings of their vassals: and the Walys of Georgia themselves were often compelled to send (as part of their tribute to the paramount sovereign,) some of the fairest of their family, and of their subjects†. When

* In Turkey it is the usage to promote slaves, from Georgia and Circassia, to the principal offices of government. This custom has its origin in the policy of despots, who, fearing the natural influence of the chiefs of tribes and men of high families, desire to raise those only whom they can cast down at pleasure.

† Joseph Emin, a brave and adventurous Armenian, who tried in vain about this period to excite his countrymen and the Georgians to throw off the degrading subjection in which they were held, informs us, that Kurreem Khan had sent to Heraclius to demand "that his daughter-in-law (the widow of his eldest son,) his heir Goorgeen "Khan, his son-in-law the Prince David, twelve noblemen's sons, and twelve beautiful "Georgian virgins, (none of whom were to be above twelve years of age,) should be "sent to him." These were required as hostages, and as slaves of his pleasure. The messenger who brought this demand threatened, in the name of his prince, an invasion of the country if it was not instantly complied with. The degraded nobles of Georgia urged their prince to compliance: but he refused; and Kurreem Khan being forced to

CHAP. XX. this tribute was withheld, or any other cause gave a pretext for war against Georgia, the Mahomedan armies rejoiced at an invasion which enabled every soldier to gratify his love of plunder and his brutal lust by the possession of Christian captives: nor had these armies much to apprehend from opposition; for the princes and nobles of this province were too divided, by the collision of their personal interests, to be united, even by the approach of a danger which nothing but their union could avert.

There had been no period for many years in the History of Georgia at which the inhabitants of that country appeared more capable of throwing off the degrading yoke, to which it had been so long subject, than at that when Aga Mahomed Khan became the monarch of Persia. Its Waly, Heraclius, had attended Nâdir Shah in his campaigns, and had gained the reputation of a good soldier. Favoured by the distractions which had prevailed in Persia subsequent to the death of that conqueror, he had preserved his native province in a state of tranquillity: but aware that it would be impossible to maintain himself without powerful aid, he sought, and obtained, the alliance of Russia. The treaty which placed Georgia under the protection of that state will be noticed hereafter: suffice it at present to say, that it transferred (as far as its ruling prince had the power of doing so,) the allegiance of the Walys of Georgia from the Sovereigns of Persia to those of Russia.

march to another quarter, could not carry his threat into execution. The same writer furnishes us with many curious facts relative to the actual condition of Georgia about this period. He gives no favourable character of any class of its inhabitants; and he expresses his opinion of the wickedness of the nobles in a very odd but emphatic manner. "They were born," he says, "twenty-four hours before the devil."

CHAP. XX.

An account of the state of Khorassan.

The kingdom of Persia is bounded to the east by the great province of Khorassan *, which is upwards of four hundred miles in length, and near three hundred in breadth. This celebrated region contains many fruitful plains, some lofty and irregular ridges of mountains, and several wide tracts of desert. It is, except in its most fertile districts, but partially supplied with water; and, from local position, has, perhaps, been more exposed to predatory invasions than any country in the universe. Whenever Persia was distracted by internal factions, or had to sustain foreign attack, the tribes of Tartary crossed the Oxus and spread themselves over Khorassan. It was this province which the valour of Roostum had to defend against the continual inroads of Afrasiab. The Seljookian chiefs invaded it long before their rule was extended over the other parts of the empire to which it belongs. It suffered greatly from the ravages of Chenghiz and of Timour: and, during the reigns of the first Suffavean kings, the Usbegs, who had conquered the country of Bokharah, made annual attacks upon its fields and cities. The genius of Abbas the Great checked these ruinous inroads: and the victorious sword of Nâdir made this race of plundering Tartars tremble for their own possessions. But the death of that conqueror left his native province more exposed than ever to hostile invasion: for, while his descendants, stript of the vast inheritance which he had bequeathed them, exercised a mock sovereignty over the City of Mushed, several military chiefs, taking advantage of the distracted state of the empire, seized upon the different forts

* This province has Irak to the west, the country of Candahar and Cabul to the east. It stretches to the north as far as the banks of the Oxus, and is bounded to the south by the arid plains of Seistan.

CHAP. XX. of Khorassan; and, aided by the confusion of the times, they succeeded in establishing a number of small principalities, over which they exercised an almost regal sway; making war or concluding peace with their petty neighbours as it suited their interest; and sometimes defying, and, at others, paying homage and tribute to the more powerful monarchs by whom they were surrounded.

Khorassan is peopled by many races: its warlike inhabitants boast their descent from Arabian, Kurd, Turkish* and Affghan tribes, who came into the province at different periods to subdue or to defend it: but neither their having so long inhabited the same soil, nor a sense of common danger, has softened those inveterate prejudices, or abated that rooted hatred, with which these races regard each other: and it had been the policy of the Monarchs of Persia to increase divisions, which enabled them to keep in subjection a country, whose inhabitants, if united by any feeling that resembled patriotism, would have been dangerous; for the men of Khorassan, from the robustness of their frame, and from their being continually inured to war, are proverbially brave: and Nâdir Shah, with the vanity of a native, but not without truth, used to term this fine province "the sword of Persia."

An account of Mushed, the capital of Khorassan, and the chiefs who governed it.

Mushed, the capital of Khorassan, had been for some years the residence of the Court of Nâdir Shah; and it was all that his successors saved from the wreck of his dominions. It has been already mentioned †, that the generous gratitude of Ahmed Shah, the Monarch of the Affghans, had assigned it, and the districts in its immediate

* The word Turkish is always used to describe the inhabitants of Turkistan, or Tartary, or those who derive their origin from that country and continue to speak its language.

† Vide Vol. II. page 113.

vicinity, to the support of the unfortunate Shah Rokh, the grandson and heir of Nâdir. The city, from this period, became a scene of distraction, which was principally owing to the incompetence of its unfortunate ruler, and the disputes of Nâsser-ullah Meerza, and Nâdir Meerza, his unworthy sons, who combated, with alternate success, for the sole possession of that power which was the right of their father. The chief ornament and support of Mushed is the tomb of the Imaum Rezâ, to which many thousands of pious pilgrims annually resort, and which had been enriched by the bounty of sovereigns. But the sacred character of this celebrated mausoleum did not save it from the sacrilegious hands of the sons of Shah Rokh, who, in their turn, plundered its treasury, and despoiled the sacred monument of its most massy * and valuable ornaments, which they converted into coin to pay their clamorous soldiers. Nâsser-ullah Meerza, who had been compelled to fly, sought the aid of Kurreem Khan: but that prudent prince having declined giving him support, he returned to Khorassan, where he soon afterwards died. This event left Nâsser-ullah without a competitor within the walls of the city: but he was attacked by the chief of a neighbouring district †, who took Mushed, and held it for five years: after which Shah Rokh was restored to nominal authority by the arms of Timour Shah, King of the Affghans, and son to the monarch

* Nâsser-ullah Meerza carried away the golden railing that surrounded the tomb, and Nâdir Meerza took down the great golden ball which ornamented the top of the dome over the grave, which was said to weigh sixty maunds, or four hundred and twenty pounds. The carpets fringed with gold, the golden lamps, and every thing valuable, were plundered by these necessitous and rapacious princes.—*Persian MS.*

† Mâmeish Khan of Chinnarân.

CHAP. XX. who had first allotted this city for the support of the family of Nâdir Shah.

The inhabitants of Mushed were reduced, at this period, to less than twenty thousand *; and its revenues had suffered a still greater decrease; for the Usbegs (who now made constant inroads,) plundered the fields close to its walls, and often led those who ventured to till them, into captivity. To render the wretchedness of the degraded descendant of Nâdir complete, he was obliged to give a great proportion of the small revenue he received, to purchase, of neighbouring chiefs, an exemption from that attack which his weakness invited.

Shah Rokh still possessed many of the jewels which Nâdir had brought from India: and we are told †, that the knowledge of this fact had already excited the cupidity of Aga Mahomed Khan, who looked to the termination of his contest with the Zund dynasty with an increased impatience when he heard of any war in Khorassan that exposed those rich ornaments to hazard. He considered them to belong to the Crown of Persia; and he thought, till he was at liberty to reclaim them, they could not be in better custody than in that of the weak ruler of Mushed.

An account of the town and district of Nishapore.

The town and district of Nishapore, which are situated about sixty miles to the south-west of Mushed, had, on the death of Nâdir Shah, been seized by Abbas Kooli Khan, a chief of the Turkish tribe of Byât ‡. His usurpation was supported by ten thousand families

* We are told, that Mushed had, at this period, not more than three thousand inhabited dwellings. In the time of Nâdir Shah it had sixty thousand; but it was then the residence of a great court.—*Persian MS.*

† Persian MS.

‡ The powerful tribe of Byât came originally from Tartary with Chenghiz Khan.

of his tribe, who were settled near that city; and he remained in undisturbed possession until attacked by Ahmed Shah Abdâllee, who took Nishapore, and carried its lord a prisoner to Cabul: but the good qualities and good fortune of Abbas Kooli combined to render this misfortune the means of his advancement. He became a favourite of his conqueror, who married his sister; and the daughter of the Affghan monarch was bestowed upon the eldest son of his captive.

The chief of the Byâts, strong in the friendship and alliance of the Royal House of Abdâllee, returned to Nishapore, and the remainder of his life was devoted to the improvement of that town, and the districts dependent upon it: but, though there is reason to believe that he was a moderate and just ruler*, we must smile when we are told by his flatterers, that, under him, Nishapore approached its ancient splendour†. That town, now doomed to become a fastness for a petty Turkish chief, whose subjects lived amid its ruins,

They were long settled in Asia Minor; and a number of them fought in the army of Bajazet against Timour. After his defeat, many of the families of this tribe were sent by the conqueror to the province of Diarbekir; but, having quarrelled with the ruler of that province, they went to the territories of Bagdad, where they lived till the time of Shah Tâmâsp, who brought them into Persia. One half was settled at Souj-Bulâgh, a district of Teheran; and the remainder at Ashrâff, in Mazenderan. They remained on these lands till Abbas the Second transplanted a number of them to Khorassan. The Byâts are still more numerous in Turkey than in Persia: but in the latter country they were, in the reign of the Suffavean monarchs, registered at forty thousand families.—*Persian MS.*

* Abbas Kooli Khan, who has the character of a mild and humane man, nevertheless obtained power over the branch of Byâts by the murder of his relation, Ahmed Khan, who was their legitimate chief.

† Persian MS.

CHAP. XX. once vied with the proudest cities in Persia. It is said to have been founded by a prince* of the Paishdadian dynasty, and to have been destroyed by Alexander the Great. We know that it was rebuilt by Shahpoor the First, who gave it the name † it now bears; and the statue of that monarch was overturned and broken by the Arabs, when they first took and plundered this royal city ‡. It had afterwards been inhabited by Sultan Mahmood of Ghizni when he was ruler of Khorassan, and was restored to considerable splendour by the first princes of the Seljookian dynasty: but Nishapore had been subsequently twice completely destroyed by the hordes of Tartary, whose progress it had been fortified to oppose. Nothing could have enabled this city to recover the degree of prosperity it had again attained, except its fine soil and delightful climate ‖: but, after all, we can only discover the shadow of its former greatness; for those limits, which could formerly boast a population of more than two hundred thousand persons, were inhabited by less than a twentieth part of that number; and many of the fields by which it was surrounded, that were now waste, were intersected by the dry channels of innumerable canals, which showed the labour that had once contributed to their verdure and fertility.

* Tahamurs.

† The name is a compound of *Ni* Reed and Shahpoor. The term *Ni*, which denotes the produce of the plain in which it stands, was given to distinguish it from the City of Shahpoor in Fars, which was also founded by Shahpoor the First.

‡ Kinnier's Persia, page 186.

‖ The fruits of Nishapore are uncommonly fine, particularly melons; its mountains are cultivated to the very summit. In these mountains, the Ferouzah, or "Turquoise "stone," is found.—*Persian MS.*

At the death of Abbas Kooli, his eldest son * appears to have been set aside as incompetent; and the second son, Ali Kooli, seized upon the government. His claims, however, were disputed by the next brother, Jaaffer Khan, who, after a short struggle, prevailed, and had the cruelty to deprive the brother with whom he contended of his eye-sight. The other acts of this chief were all of the same nature: and we may conclude from his character, that his subjects looked forward with satisfaction to that change in their condition which the recent success of Aga Mahomed Khan must have led them to expect.

An account of the district and rulers of Tubbus.

Among the most powerful of the chiefs of Khorassan, was Meer Hussein Khan of Tubbus, who has been before mentioned, as having offered an asylum and given aid to the unfortunate Lootf Aly Khan. The possessions of this chief, which were situated in the southern part of the province, were so surrounded with deserts, as to be almost inaccessible to a numerous army. Meer Hussein Khan was the chief of the Arabian tribe Ben-Shaibân, which had been settled at Rhé when Persia was under the rule of the Caliphs of Bagdad, and were transplanted to the soil that they now inhabited by one of the kings of the Suffavean dynasty. Favoured by situation, by the valour and attachment of their tribe, and by the unsettled condition of the empire, the chiefs of this race had, for centuries, maintained themselves in the possession they now enjoyed; and their rule had, at different periods, extended over several other districts of Khorassan. They had usually acknow-

* He had eight sons. The manuscript I write from states, that the eldest, Mahomed Hussein Khan, had no talents for rule. It then proceeds to describe the contests between the two next, and the other five are never noticed.

CHAP. XX. ledged the King of Persia as their paramount sovereign; and, when the empire was in a settled state, had neither withheld their tribute nor the service of a quota of their troops: and the most powerful Monarchs of Persia had preferred the benefit they derived from this qualified submission, to the hazard of an effort to subdue them.

The immediate predecessors * of the ruler of Tubbus had been remarkable for their courage and enterprise. He was himself deemed a sensible and moderate man, who, solely intent upon preserving

* Aly Murdân Khan, the father of the present chief, had not hesitated, with an army of six or seven thousand men, to advance to Goonâhâbâd, the frontier of his possessions, and engage an Affghan force of nearly treble his numbers, which Ahmed Shah had sent to attack him. He completely defeated them; and was equally successful in an action which he fought against still superior numbers sent by the same sovereign to revenge his former disgrace. But the gallant chief continued his pursuit of the latter force with an imprudent ardour: he fell into an ambush and was slain, after a desperate resistance: not one of the party who accompanied him either fled or surrendered; they all fell near the body of their chief. But the enemy were ignorant of the importance of their victory, till a dying soldier, whom they were stripping, exclaimed, "Why do you waste your time on me, when the body of the noble Aly Murdân Khan "lies near that well?" They hastened to inform the Affghan general of this event, who collected his fugitive army: and the troops of Tubbus, dispirited by the loss of their chief, fled before those whom they had so lately conquered. Meer Mahomed Khan, the eldest son of the deceased chief, succeeded to his authority; and, after Ahmed Shah left Khorassan, he formed the project, not only of subduing that province, but of carrying his arms into the territories of the Affghans. He took Mushed, and several other towns in Khorassan. But his ambition was checked by the occurrence of divisions in his own family; and, after he had settled these, his life terminated in a manner not dissimilar to that of his father. He had defeated the troops of a neighbouring chief, Aly Yâr Khan, of Subzâwâr. When pursuing his enemies, his horse fell, and he was killed upon the spot. He was succeeded by his brother, Meer Hussein Khan.

his family possessions, cherished no schemes of attacking those of others. His territories were about one hundred and fifty miles in length, and nearly as much in breadth; but great part of them was barren waste. The Town of Tubbus, which was rudely fortified, owed its principal strength to being surrounded for more than thirty miles in every direction by a desert. Meer Hussein Khan maintained an army of two thousand horse and six thousand foot; and his followers were surpassed by none in valour or attachment to their chief. The whole population of the country is not estimated at more than thirty thousand families; but many of these are affluent, and almost all of them possessed of property*. From the chief to the lowest of his subjects, they traffic in sheep and camels; but mostly in the latter, which they breed in their arid plains in great numbers. These they either sell or let; and the chief of Tubbus has generally more than a thousand camels hired out to the merchants of his own country, or to others who dwell in its vicinity.

Condition of the town and district of Kayn.

The Arab tribe of Ben-Shaibân have now dwelt in this country for nearly two centuries, under the family of their present chief. The author of a Memoir on the actual state of Khorassan observes, "that they have never been expelled from their homes, (even for a "day:) nor do they live," he adds, "in fear of any such calamity †." The means of their rulers, though limited for the purposes of ambition, are ample for those of defence: and the inhabitants of Tubbus, and its dependent districts ‡, may hear, without a sigh, the travellers

* This country is celebrated for producing the best tobacco in Persia.

† Persian MS.

‡ The principal of these is Toom, which lies at the distance of about sixty miles: it is defended by a very strong ark, or citadel.

CHAP. XX. who pass over their barren mountains and sandy deserts, tell of those fruitful fields, and delightful streams, which belong to countries that are at one moment the abode of plenty and of enjoyment; and at another, a scene of rapine and of desolation.

The town and district of Kayn, which lie to the south-east of Tubbus, were under the rule of an Arabian family* of high rank, whose ancestor, Meer Ismail Khan, received a grant of it, to maintain his tribe, from the last of the Suffavean monarchs. This chief served with distinction in the army of Nâdir Shah, and his grandson now inherited this sterile possession†. Numbers of camels are reared in the plains of Kayn, and its mountains are covered with sheep; from the wool of which, carpets of different textures are made, of a quality equal to any produced in Persia. The rulers of this province usually pay their tribute in this manufacture‡; but the military service of their followers has always been an object more desired by their paramount lord than the revenue of the lands they inhabit: for the Arabs|| of Kayn have long enjoyed the reputation of

* They were Syuds, of the tribe of Khâzinâh.

† A part of the district of Kayn borders on the Desert of Seistan, while it is bounded in another quarter by the territories of the Affghans. The Desert of Seistan, which borders on Kayn, is called by the Mahomedan author whom I follow, "the Desert of "Lot." He asserts, in the same passage, "that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, "whom God destroyed, and heaped the ruins upon the heads of their guilty inha-"bitants, were situated in this part of Persia."

‡ The revenue of Kayn was estimated, under the Suffavean princes, at twelve thousand tomâns in specie, and as many khârwârs, or ass loads of grain. The tomân is about forty shillings, and the ass load one hundred maunds Tabreez, or seven hundred pounds weight.

|| They are computed at about twenty thousand families. The usual force which their chief maintains, is between two and three thousand infantry, and a few horse.

being the hardiest and the bravest of the infantry of Khorassan. Their present chief* had granted his aid to the unfortunate Lootf Aly Khan; but the nature and situation of his country left him little to fear from the resentment of Aga Mahomed, whose wisdom would, he knew, at all times, prefer his proffered allegiance, to the hazard to which his troops must be exposed in an unprofitable expedition, amid barren deserts and rugged mountains.

State of the district of Tursheez.

The district of Tursheez, which lies immediately north of Tubbus, is in possession of another tribe of Arabs †. Their chief ‡, who had been Governor both of Kermanshah and of Herat, was forced, after the death of Nâdir Shah, to leave Irak with his tribe. He was invited by his brother || to settle at Tursheez, of which the latter had made himself master. Like other rulers of similar condition, the chiefs of this place were often engaged in petty wars with their neighbours, and in internal disputes §; but the authority of Moostâphâ Kooli Khan ¶ was, at this period, acknowledged by the whole tribe. The district of Tursheez is very productive **. It abounds in grain, and in fruits †† of all descriptions: but the Usbegs

* Meer Aly Khan.

† They are called Meishmust, or "the wanton sheep:" a name they are said to have derived from having entered into a war about a sheep. They belonged, before that event, to the tribe of Jûmâllee.

‡ The name of this chief was Abdool Aly. He was a soldier of reputation, and much esteemed by Nâdir.

|| Khulleel Khan.

§ MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

¶ The son of Abdool Aly Khan.

** Its revenue is estimated at thirty thousand tomâns Khorassanee (about sixty thousand pounds,) per annum. This is the nett produce to the ruler, besides all payment of collection, and the lands made over for the maintenance of his tribe.

†† The grapes, figs, and pomegranates of Tursheez, are deemed equal, if not superior, to any in Persia.

CHAP. XX.

had, for several years past, annually laid waste its fields, and plundered its villages.

An account of Isaak Khan.

At a short distance* from Tursheez, a chief, called Isaak Khan, had established an influence and power, which was, perhaps, inferior to that of none of the petty rulers of Khorassan, and which was rendered more remarkable from having been entirely created by his personal exertions. Amid the sameness of scenes of usurpation, the attention is forcibly arrested by the contemplation of a man, who had overcome every prejudice, and every obstacle that could combine to prevent his either aspiring to, or attaining authority. Isaak Khan had not even the rank which belongs to the lowest individual of a military tribe. He was born a Taujick†, and was, according to prejudice, by birth unwarlike: but his father, who was the servant of a chief of the branch of the tribe of Kârâ Tâtâr‡, had shown himself above the duties of a shepherd, which was his first employ, and had latterly been trusted with the command of a hundred men. The young Isaak, who derived claims from the character of his father, was appointed one of the mace-bearers to his chief, whom he persuaded to depute him to Turbut-e-Hyderee, (then an inconsiderable place,) to rebuild a caravansary for the use of travellers. Having obtained a considerable sum of money for this purpose, he com-

* About thirty miles to the north-east.

† The word Taujick has been before explained. It is always applied to unwarlike peasants and citizens.

‡ The black Tâtârs, or, as Europeans would term it, Tartars. This tribe had come from Tartary with Timour. He had settled part of them in Turkey, and part in Khorassan. After his death they had dispersed. Nâdir Shah had desired to reassemble them, and seven or eight thousand families had been brought together under Nujuff Aly Khan, the chief in whose service Isaak Khan and his father were employed.

menced the execution of his task. But his plans, which had been long laid, now approached to maturity. He gradually converted the caravansary he was directed to build into a square fort; and his intrigues to foment divisions in the tribe to which he was attached were so successful, that by the time his work was completed, the chief that had employed him was slain by some of his own officers, and his sons were compelled to fly the country, to save themselves from a similar fate.

These events produced feuds in the tribe of Kârâ Tâtâr, which added to the power of Isaak Khan, with whom all the discontented found refuge; and, strengthened by these adherents, and by that wisdom which enabled him to turn every occurrence, amid the revolutions which surrounded him, to advantage, the shepherd's son soon became one of the most powerful nobles of Khorassan. He had been, in the early part of his career, greatly aided by the monarch of the Affghans, whose army he had joined, and whose court he had visited: but when his power increased, he ventured to throw off his allegiance; and the troubled state of the dominions of Cabul left him without apprehension from that quarter.

A writer, who was in Khorassan the year before that province was invaded by Aga Mahomed Khan, states, "that the possessions "of Isaak Khan extend on the north to the gates of Mushed, a "distance of more than a hundred miles; and they stretch almost "as far south in the direction of Khâf*. His revenue is very "considerable; and he maintains a force of six thousand men: but

* The direct line is rather south-east.

CHAP. XX. "he trusts more to policy than to arms for his future security. "This extraordinary man," he remarks, "has hitherto never failed "in conciliating, when it was necessary, the good opinion and con- "fidence of his superiors. He is dreaded and hated by those that "deem themselves his equals; who have seen, with envy and asto- "nishment, the success of all his measures: but no ruler was ever "more beloved by his subjects; and none," continues his biographer *, "ever more merited to be so; for to them he devotes "himself. He manages all his own affairs; and, in his most remote "districts, there are no great renters, or deputies, who have the "power to oppress his people. His mind is incessantly occupied, "and he was never known to spend an idle moment. No one," this writer † observes, "is intrusted with the secrets of this inscrut- "able man; but experience has led all to repose with confidence "in his wisdom. He is the first merchant in his country; and "derives, from this source, half as much revenue ‡ as he takes from "his subjects. The integrity and regularity of his dealing is so "remarkable, that his bills are current not only in Khorassan, "but all over Cabul and Persia. This chief," the same author adds, "reads a great deal, and is esteemed a good Arabian and

* Persian MS. † MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

‡ His whole revenue is computed at a hundred thousand tomâns, (two hundred thousand pounds); thirty thousand of which is stated to be from his own estates, almost all of which he has purchased; forty thousand from his subjects; and twenty thousand, profits of his merchandise. He is said to have three thousand camels continually on hire with the caravans between India and Persia. He exports all the dried fruits and other produce of his own estates, and imports the produce of other countries, which he sells.

" Persian scholar. He is thoroughly versed both in the history of " his country and neighbouring nations; and he appears careful " to give his sons the best possible education, particularly those by " the daughter of the chief of the Kârâ Tâtârs, whom he married " soon after the death of that noble. His politic preference of this " part of his family, and his declaration that the eldest son of this " high-born lady shall be his heir, has reconciled many of her tribe " to his authority."

The greatest relaxation which Isaak Khan permitted himself to enjoy, was, perhaps, of a nature more calculated to give stability to his power, as it advanced his reputation, than all the labour he underwent. Turbut-e-Hyderee, which he had raised from an inconsiderable village into a town of consequence, was a place of great resort to pilgrims, merchants, and travellers. The Persians boast (not without some reason) that they excel all other nations in the virtue of hospitality. It is natural, therefore, that they should dwell with exultation on this part of the character of Isaak Khan; whose Mehmân Khânâh, or hall of entertainment, which could contain nearly five hundred guests, was always open; and from it, none, however low, or of whatever persuasion, were excluded. The author before quoted * remarks, " that his hospitality and charity are so " boundless, that even the Hindoos † who applied here are supplied " with money, that they might purchase and eat apart that meal " which their religion forbad them to enjoy in the society of others."

* MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

† There are a number of Hindoos settled in Khorassan, and many pass through that province on their way to other parts of Persia.

CHAP. XX. Isaak Khan is represented * as delighting in this part of his establishment. He always dines with his guests; and his attentions are said to be so divided, that, to use the words of a Persian author †, "Princes and beggars are equally pleased." It is in these hours of relaxation that he displays his great knowledge of men and books, and adds, by the information he receives, to his vast stock of knowledge. We cannot be surprised that those who have for days, weeks, and months, listened to his conversation, and partaken of his hospitality, should spread his name in every direction. This reputation was of itself a safeguard, for the most absolute sovereigns of Asia are themselves the slaves of public opinion; and the monarch who, without an adequate pretext, should even diminish means so justly accumulated and so nobly used, would be exposed to reproach from all who had either enjoyed or heard of the bounty of this extraordinary man. This account of Isaak Khan is taken from the pen of one who knew and admired that chief; but it is confirmed by the information of more impartial observers; and, though it may be highly coloured, there can be no doubt that it is substantially true.

State of the district of Subzâwar.

The Town and district of Subzâwar ‡, which lies between that of Turbut-e-Hyderee and Irak, has, since the death of Nâdir Shah, been

* Meerza Aly Nuckee, a very sensible Persian, who had travelled a great deal, and was several weeks at Turbut-e-Hyderee, was still more enthusiastic in his praises of the extraordinary talents and the hospitality of Isaak Khan, than the author of the history of that chief, which has been followed.

† MS. History of the Chiefs of Khorassan.

‡ The revenue of this province has been estimated at twelve thousand tomâns, (twenty thousand pounds,) twenty-four thousand khârwârs of grain, one thousand of cotton, and three hundred of silk.

in the possession of Aly Yâr Khan, the chief of a Turkish tribe *, who has endeavoured, by fortifying some strong holds, to render himself independent: but he possesses little power, and has often been in danger from the attacks of the petty rulers in his vicinity. To the north of Mushed, along the more mountainous part of Khorassan, (which borders on the country of the Turkomans, who now inhabit the lands of the ancient kingdom of Khaurizm,) two Kurdish chiefs, high in the favour and employ of Nâdir and his successors, established their tribe. These chiefs were both dead, but their sons had inherited their possessions. Ameer Goonâh Khan † was the ruler of Kâbooshân; and Mâmeish Khan, of Chinnaran. There is nothing in the history of these two nobles which merits notice. They had fortified the towns in which they resided sufficiently to resist the attack of an army unprovided with artillery: but their fields were continually exposed to the inroads of the Turkoman tribes in one quarter, and the ruler of the Usbegs in the other. The former they were able to oppose: but they were compelled to purchase an exemption from the violence of the latter, by a present, or rather tribute, which was repeated every time that he made or threatened an incursion into their territories. Though the tract of country over which their authority was established was not large, it was very productive. Some part of their revenue, particularly that of Mâmeish Khan, was derived from his superior stud of horses: these were descended from the fine Arabians brought by Nâdir Shah to this quarter; and the progeny, from being crossed with the stronger breeds of the country, and nourished with rich pasture, attained to

An account of the rulers of Kabooshan and Chinnaran.

* The name of the tribe is Ghilichi. They are a branch of the tribe of Tochtamish, the first of the tribes of Kapchack.

† The name of his tribe is Zufferânloo.

CHAP. XX. considerable size and strength, as well as beauty: and so great was their value, that the monarchs, whose paramount power he was compelled to acknowledge, had always made it a condition, that part of the tribute of Mâmeish Khan should be some of his highest bred colts.

State of the City of Merv.

To the east of the possessions of these chiefs stands the once celebrated City of Merv, the capital (as has been before stated,) of the ancient Margiana. This city was founded by Alexander the Great, and became the residence of one of his successors, Antiochus Nicator, who called it Antiocha. In more modern days it was deemed one of the four royal cities * of Khorassan, and was often the residence of powerful monarchs. When the Suffavean kings fixed their capital at Isfahan, Merv, which became the frontier city on the most exposed quarter of the empire, was always committed to the charge of a military leader of the highest rank. In the reign of Tâmâsp the First, a branch † of the Kujur tribe had been sent to Merv; and their chiefs had, with some vicissitudes of fortune, ever since remained governors of that city. Subsequent to the death of Nâdir Shah, Byram Aly Khan maintained it for a long period against the annual attacks of the Usbegs: but the contest was unequal; and the gallant chief, after a noble struggle ‡, was defeated and slain in an action which was fought near the banks of the Oxus. His son, Mahomed Hussein Khan, who was every way worthy of his father, maintained, for a short period, the

* These four were Mushed, or Toos, Nishapore, Herat, and Merv.

† The name of this branch is Azdânloo.

‡ In the Life of Byram Aly Khan, which is given at some length in a Persian manuscript in my possession, he is said, by his valour and conduct, to have gained frequent and great advantages over the Usbegs.

possession of the walls of the City of Merv, which were his only inheritance; for the Usbegs had rendered the country round it a barren waste. Though denied aid by the chiefs of Khorassan, and very inefficiently supported by the Affghan monarch, Timour Shah, he continued, while a ray of hope remained, to strive against adversity: but the inhabitants of Merv, who began to experience all the miseries of famine, at last compelled him to surrender*.

A. D. 1795.

Condition of the Pâchâ of Bagdad.

The Court of Constantinople was, at this period, too deeply involved in the result of those changes which distracted Europe, to be able to take any concern in the affairs of Persia. It left the management of these to the rulers of its eastern provinces, the principal of whom was Soliman Aga, who had for many years been Pâchâ of Bagdad. This chief has been already mentioned as the brave defender of Bussorah when it was attacked by the troops of Kurreem Khan. He had subsequently attained his present high station, in which he had used every means to strengthen himself, that he might escape the usual fate of Turkish governors. He had been completely successful, and was considered to be

* Mahomed Hussein Khan was carried a prisoner to Bokharah; and for some time after his arrival at that city he was treated with honour and distinction: but he soon became an object of jealousy to his conqueror, and was obliged to save his life by sudden flight. After wandering for several years as an exile, and suffering all the vicissitudes of fortune, he reached the Court of Persia, where he was received in the warmest manner: and he at this moment enjoys the friendship of the king, who honours him with peculiar regard. But even royal favours cannot banish from the memory of this able and respectable nobleman the traces of his misfortunes; for he has not only been deprived of his inheritance, but has survived the destruction of his tribe, and the death of all his family, most of whom were sacrificed to appease the resentment of the tyrannical bigot from whose power he had fled.

CHAP. XX. firmly established in his pachalik. His mild virtues* had contributed as much as his wisdom and courage to the fulfilment of this object. He was beloved by the inhabitants of Bagdad, and of the cities under his immediate rule. The tributaries of his government, which included the Arab tribes† who feed their flocks on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, between his capital and Bussorah, and the different chiefs of Kurdistan, who acknowledged themselves subjects of the Turkish government, viewed Soliman Pâchâ with respect, and granted him a willing obedience: while the Court of Constantinople, after discovering that his authority was too strongly established to be easily subverted, declared itself satisfied with his rule. His moderation and good sense led him to preserve the most amicable relations with all his neighbours; and since the death of Kurreem Khan no circumstance had occurred to disturb the good understanding which subsisted between Persia and Turkey.

* I visited the Court of Soliman Pâchâ in A. D. 1800, and was equally struck by the simplicity and manliness of his character. This chief, like most of those who enjoy high station in the Turkish territories, had been a slave; but no unpleasant feelings seemed associated with the recollection of his former condition. After he had introduced me to some of his chief officers, he called up a person, and said: "This, "Captain Malcolm, is the son of my first master. He treated me with the greatest "kindness. I try to repay the obligation by considering his son as my own child!"

† The rule of the Turkish government over these tribes is very lenient: and they have been rescued, by submission to it, from a condition of continual war with each other. They are sensible of this benefit: and I heard a chief of one of them say, "That if there was no Pâchâ of Bagdad, he would put a Turk's cap upon a stick, and "not only offer it allegiance, but recommend all the tribes in his neighbourhood to do "the same."

CHAP. XX.

An account of Ahmed Shah Abdâllee and his successors.

The rise of Ahmed Shah Abdâllee to the sovereignty of Cabul and Candahar has been before noticed. That prince had greatly added to the wealth and fame of his own family and his kingdom by six successive invasions of India, in all of which he was successful; but in one he obtained the highest renown among Mahomedans by the memorable defeat* that he gave to the Marhatta army, which he encountered upon the plains of Paniput, a few miles to the northward of Dehli. This victory was the first effectual check to the power of that great Hindoo nation, whose conquests, a few months before it was gained, extended from the most southern regions of the peninsula of India to the banks of the Indus.

Ahmed Shah, as has been already mentioned†, subdued the greater part of Khorassan; and he was acknowledged as their paramount sovereign by almost all the chiefs of that quarter. This prince was continually occupied in foreign wars. He had in fact no other means of subsisting his army, or of preserving the obedience of his turbulent vassals. He received but a small revenue from his extensive territories; for the countries of Cabul and Candahar had almost all been made over to different tribes, who, in return for the lands that supported them, gave their military service. Ahmed was too able and too considerate to hazard his power by an attempt to subdue his rude subjects into a submission that was incompatible with

* This famous action was fought in January A. D. 1761. It was a contest between the Mahomedans and Hindoos for the sovereignty of India. The Mahomedan army amounted to sixty thousand men, of whom not one half were Affghans: but his own troops were those upon which Ahmed Shah most depended. The Marhattas were computed between seventy and eighty thousand. They were defeated with great slaughter.

† Vide Vol. II. page 112.

CHAP. XX. their usages. He was grateful for their attachment, and patient of their disobedience; and endeavoured, by every means he could, to improve the advantage which he derived from belonging to the venerated family of Seedoozehi*. By accommodating his rule to the character and prejudices of his subjects, he became a powerful monarch. But his authority had never any other foundation than his popularity with the warlike tribes of his nation; and as these were devoted to their respective chiefs, and distracted by internal feuds, we can hardly conceive a more uncertain or dangerous inheritance than that which this sovereign bequeathed at his death † to his son, Timour Shah ‡. That prince, more intent on the enjoyment than the increase of his power, seemed only desirous of repose. He removed the seat of government from Candahar to Cabul, because he preferred the peaceable disposition of the inhabitants of the latter city to the turbulence of those of the former. He maintained hardly any troops except a body of guards, formed chiefly of men not belonging to Affghan tribes; and so far from attempting foreign conquests, he allowed the great feudatories of the empire to withhold their tribute, and some even to throw off their allegiance, without an effort to subdue them. Notwithstanding his weakness and inaction, Timour Shah, aided by the impression of his father's character ||, occupied the throne which he had inherited

* Vide description of this tribe, Vol. I. page 599.

† He died in June 1773. He was only fifty years of age.

‡ Timour had to overcome some opposition before he obtained the crown, the vizier of Ahmed Shah having, when that sovereign died, attempted to raise his younger brother to the throne.

|| One author states, that he was greatly indebted to the full treasury he possessed

twenty years. But the repose which had marked his reign terminated with his life; and his son, Zemaun Shah, was assailed by the open or secret attacks of all his brothers, who found ready adherents among martial tribes, who hated that tranquillity which condemned them to inaction.

State of Scind.

Several of the southern provinces of the Affghan kingdom had thrown off their dependance on the Monarchs of Cabul. The government of Scind had been usurped by a race of chiefs* whose ancestors were converted from the Hindoo faith; and that fine province was, at this period, under the rule of three brothers of this family, who had established an authority which was even more rude and barbarous than that which they had subverted. The countries of Seistan, of Baloochistan, and of Mekran, had, since the death of Ahmed Shah, granted no more than a nominal obedience. The chief of one of the principal tribes of the former province, though he only enjoys a revenue of a few thousand rupees†, and his whole force hardly amounts to five hundred men, styles himself the descendant of the ancient Kings of Persia, and adds to his name the proud title of Kaianee. This plunderer, for such he is, inhabits a small town called Jullalabad, situated amid the vast ruins of the ancient City of Seistan, or Dooshak; and among those that obey him are the

Seistan, Baloochistan, and Mekran.

for the tranquillity his territories enjoyed. This might have had that effect, as it placed him above the necessity of acts of violence and oppression.

* Scind, which may be described as forming a delta where the mouths of the Indus fall into the ocean, and which, bounded by the sea to the south, and by deserts that divide it from the provinces of India to the east, is separated to the northward and westward by lofty ranges of mountains from the countries of Baloochistan and Affghanistan.

† Captain Christie's Journal.

CHAP. XX. tribe of Nousheerwan, who feed their flocks in the Vale of Sohrab *. We cannot but smile when the glory of the former days of Persia is brought to our contemplation by such symbols: but the existence of these ancient names among this rude and unaltered people, the immense ruins which are found in every part of this deserted, but once flourishing province, afford the strongest evidence that there is a foundation in truth for what has ever been deemed the most fabulous part of the ancient History of Persia †.

Baloochistan, and great part of Mekran, were, at this period, under the rule of Nâsser Khan, whose ancestors had enjoyed considerable power over these barren countries for nearly two centuries. The conciliating policy of Ahmed Shah had induced this chief to become his vassal: but a regular treaty was drawn up between the sovereign and his powerful dependant; and one condition stipulated, that neither Nâsser Khan, nor his successors, should ever be called upon to interfere or to aid in the settlement of any of the internal disputes of the Affghans. That chief had, since the death of Ahmed, withdrawn himself from the Court of Cabul, and his territories could not, therefore, be deemed subject to that prince. The Kings of Cabul still retained a small part of Khorassan: their principal

* The late Captain Christie, who travelled through Seistan in 1810, describes Sohrab as a fine valley, extending north and south about fifty miles, and about twelve in breadth. He lodged in a village of the same name as the valley. This officer also visited Dooshak; the ruins of which, he affirms, cover as much ground as the site of Isfahan. The houses appear to have been built of sun-dried bricks, with arched and dome roofs, and were in general two stories high. The modern Town of Jullalabad contains about two thousand inhabitants.—Captain CHRISTIE's *Journal.*

† The History of Roostum and his Family.—Vide Vol. I. chap. vi. and vii.

possession in that province was the City of Herat, which had been committed to the care of a son of the reigning monarch, Zemaun Shah.

An account of the Tartar tribes who inhabit the countries between the Oxus and Jaxartes.

This chapter would be incomplete without a view of the actual condition of that part of Tartary which is situated between Khorassan and the Jaxartes. The inhabitants of this region had, from the most early ages, made constant inroads upon the frontier provinces of Persia; and they several times overrun and subjugated the whole of that kingdom. Four centuries had elapsed since the sword of Timour had laid waste its fields and destroyed its cities: but the traces of desolation still remained, to remind its inhabitants of what their ancestors had suffered; and they watched, with the most anxious alarm, every appearance which indicated the gathering of clouds in that quarter whence those storms had burst which had overwhelmed their country in ruin.

Those provinces which lie immediately north of Khorassan, between the Oxus and the Caspian, and which formed part of the kingdom of Khaurizm, are possessed by a number of tribes, which trace their descent from some men of a Moghul family*, who are represented to have emigrated at a very early period from the northern parts of Tartary to the provinces they now inhabit. They married, according to this account, the women of the country where they settled; and, though their descendants were not deemed worthy of being ranked in the tribe of their

* D'Herbelot, on the authority of Mirkhond, states, that they were of the tribe of Oghouz Khan, who was the third prince of the Moghul dynasty, being the grandson of Moghul Khan, its founder.

CHAP. XX. fathers, they were, as a robust and warlike race, denominated Turkoman*, which signifies "like or resembling to Turks."

We have, in former parts of this History, made frequent mention of these tribes. They had enjoyed large possessions in Asia Minor, in the plains of which many of them still dwell. Their chiefs had, at one time, attained sovereign power in Persia, and two families of Turkoman princes are numbered among the dynasties who have possessed that empire. The tribes † which now occupied the pasture lands on the eastern shore of the Caspian, were too disunited to attempt conquest, or to pretend to power; but they were, at the same time, too bold and restless to remain at peace: and, during the whole period that intervened from the death of Nâdir Shah till the establishment of the power of Aga Mahomed Khan, they had made almost annual predatory inroads into Persia: nor were their enterprises confined to the provinces in their vicinity; they were extended into Irak. We are assured, from authority we cannot doubt, that parties of twenty or thirty Turkoman horse often ventured within sight of the City of Isfahan. They expected success in these incursions from the suddenness of their attack, and the uncommon activity and strength of the horses on which they rode. Their sole object was plunder; and when they arrived at an unprotected village, the youth of both sexes were seized, and tied on led horses, (which the Turkomans took with them for

* Turkoman is an abbreviated compound of Turk-manund: the latter term signifies "resembling." The etymology of this name is at once so simple and so probable, that we can hardly doubt its correctness.

† The families of the white and black sheep.—Vide Vol. I. page 490.

the purpose of carrying their booty,) and hurried away into a distant captivity, with a speed* which generally baffled all pursuit.

Though the hostility of these barbarians was a serious evil to the districts which they visited, they had no collective strength that could render them formidable as an enemy to Persia: but the condition of the tribes which dwelt beyond the Oxus, as far as the Lake of Arral in one direction, and the Jaxartes in another, was very different. These had been either subdued by the arts or the power of a prince called Beggee Jân, who, clothed in the humble garment of a mendicant, and deriving at one moment aid from superstition, and at another from his sword, had established his authority over the kingdom of Maverul-Naher, or Transoxania.

A great tribe, or rather a horde, who dwell upon the plains of Kapchack, adopted the name of their ruler, Usbeg Khan, a prince of the race of Chenghiz. The appellation of Usbeg afterwards became that of a considerable nation, which boasted, among its people, some of the most warlike tribes of Tartary. The defeat of this race by Timour has been already stated, as well as their subsequent success against his descendant, the celebrated Baber †. The

* The Turkoman horse is a fine animal, between fifteen and sixteen hands high. He is bred from the Arabian: but the cross of the breed of the country, and the fine pasture, have given him great size and strength. There are probably no horses in the world that can endure so much fatigue. I ascertained, after the minutest examination of the fact, that those small parties of Turkomans who ventured several hundred miles into Persia, used both to advance and retreat at the average of nearly one hundred miles a day. They train their horses for these expeditions as we should for a race; and the expression they use to describe a horse in condition for a chapow (which may be translated a foraye) is, that "his flesh is marble."

† Vide Vol. I. page 489.

CHAP. XX. Usbeg chief who had overcome that prince, was, in his turn, overthrown and slain by the gallant Shah Ismail, the first monarch of the Suffavean race who filled the throne of Persia. But his descendants continued, for three centuries, to reign over the territories of Bokharah. Their power had, for some years before Nâdir Shah invaded that country, been upon the decline; and that event, by degrading their authority, may be said to have terminated their rule. The few princes who were subsequently elevated to the throne were merely pageants in the hands of powerful chiefs: and we are informed, that when the male line of the race of Chenghiz * became extinct, a son of a pious Syud (who was said to be descended of a female † branch of the royal family,) was raised to the throne; and to this pageant, proud and jealous tribes granted their nominal

* Raheem Beg, who had commanded the ten thousand Usbegs sent with Nâdir, usurped, after the death of that monarch, the chief power at Bokharah. He slew Abool Fyze Khan, and elevated his infant son, Abdool Momeen Khan: but on hearing some years afterwards, that the young prince, when practising archery, had, on aiming at a water-melon, in which he saw a fancied resemblance to Raheem Beg, said, "Now "for the head of Atta Baba," (or father-tutor,) the name he gave Raheem Beg; that chief conceived he cherished designs of revenging his father, and directed his death in a manner that should make it appear accidental. This was effected by one of his companions running against him when standing on the brink of a well. He was the last of the male descendants of Chenghiz.—Meer Yusoof Aly's *MS.*

† The prince so elevated is termed Khaujah Zadah, or son of a Khaujah. The title of Khaujah, or Shaikh, is in Tartary only given to the descendants of the prophet, or of the three first caliphs, Aboubeker, Omar, and Osman. But it is the habit of the Kings of Tartary, as it had been for those of Persia, to marry their daughters to pious Syuds; and it is stated, that the children selected as pageants were descendants of the royal family by female branches.

allegiance. The internal discord, however, which this state of affairs occasioned, had reduced the government of the Usbegs to the lowest state of weakness. It was restored to efficiency and power by the extraordinary efforts of one of the most uncommon characters that any age or country has produced.

History of Beggee Jân.

Beggee Jân * was the eldest son of the Ameer Daniel, who had, during the latter years of his life, by possessing himself of the person of the nominal prince †, exercised an almost absolute authority over those tribes of the Usbegs which inhabit the territories immediately dependent upon Bokharah. When that noble died, he divided his great wealth among his numerous family, but declared Beggee Jân his heir. That chief, however, who had for some time ‡ before

* The name of this extraordinary man was Ameer Maâssoom: his title was Shah Moorâd, which signifies the "desired king;" but he is best known by his more familiar appellation of Beggee Jân, which is the name used by almost all his countrymen when speaking of this favourite prince. I shall therefore use it, in preference to the others.

† The name of this pageant was Abdool Ghâzee Khan. He was the son of a Syud, or Khaujah, called Abdool Raheem Chakboottee, or "old clothes;" alluding (according to the MS. I here follow,) to an usage this pious man had of picking up old clothes, washing them, and making them up again, in order to bestow upon the poor, or to use as garments for himself. Meer Yusoof Aly (the author of the MS.) adds, that the youngest son of Abdool Raheem had been chosen by Raheem Beg, when he conquered the tribes of Khaurizm, to be their king; and these turbulent subjects had yielded an obedience to the young Syud, which they would have given to no Tartar chief. When, however, Raheem Beg died, they put the pageant he had placed upon the throne to death.—MEER YUSOOF ALY's *MS.*

‡ The Manuscript of Mahomed Aly Gunjavee states, that he had for many years led this life: but Meer Yusoof Aly asserts, that he was, in his youth, very licentious, that he did not retire from the world till he was thirty-five years of age, and that his

CHAP. XX. clothed himself in the patched garment of a fakeer, or religious mendicant, instead of taking a part in those contests for power into which all his brothers and near relations had entered, shut himself up in a mosque, and forbad any person to disturb his religious meditations. He also refused to accept the share which had been left to him of his father's wealth. "Take it," said he to those who brought it to him, "to the managers of the public charities. Bid "them reimburse with it, as far as they can, those from whom it was "extorted. I can never consent to stain my hands with money that "has been obtained by violence." The same writer who states this fact, asserts, that he attired himself in the coarse dress worn by those who supplicate for mercy, and, having hung a sword round his neck, he proceeded to every quarter of the City of Bokharah, imploring, with tears in his eyes, the forgiveness and blessings of the inhabitants for his deceased father, and offering his own life as an expiatory sacrifice for any sins or crimes which the Ameer Daniel might have committed. The character of Beggee Jân already stood high among the learned and religious; for he was deeply versed in theology, and had written many valuable tracts: but this was the first time he had presented himself to the people. These, at once astonished and delighted at seeing such proofs of humility and sanctity in a person of his rank, crowded around him as if he had been a prophet, and all joined with him in prayers for blessings upon his parent. After having, by

father's death happened about a year afterwards. If we grant credit to his account, Beggee Jân (like Henry V.) had been severely reprehended by the chief judge of his father's capital: but, unlike our generous prince, Beggee Jân, the moment he had the power, put the venerable Vizier of Bokharah, who had censured his conduct, to death.

this proceeding*, eradicated those feelings of revenge which the violence of his father's rule had excited, he retired to the principal mosque of the city, where he gave himself up for several months † to devotion and mental abstraction. No one was allowed to approach him during this period, except some of his favourite disciples.

Beggee Jân, when he first assumed the holy mantle, had adopted the tenets of a Sooffee. He now openly professed himself to be one of those visionary devotees, who, from having their souls continually fixed on the contemplation of the divine essence, expect to attain a state of mental beatitude, which leads them to despise all the pleasures of this world, and, above all, earthly power. Consistency required, that while he professed this doctrine, he should not easily comply with the entreaties of the inhabitants of Bokharah; who, wearied with the internal troubles caused by the ambition of his relations, earnestly solicited him to assume the government. The populace, who were entirely devoted to him, assembled daily at the mosque where he resided, and attended him wherever he went. The first instance in which he used the great influence and authority that

* In this account I have followed the Manuscript of Mahomed Aly Gunjavee. Meer Yusoof Aly states, that he only went over part of Bokharah, and deputed Moollah Meer Hashem to go over the remaining parts of the city. The difference in these accounts is immaterial. We are told by the former, that one man alone refused to join in the prayers for the Ameer Daniel. "That noble," he said, "extorted money "from me, and I cannot render the act lawful by forgiving him." The sum was large; but Beggee Jân was instantly enabled to pay it, by the voluntary contributions of his enthusiastic followers.

† One of the writers of his life states, that he remained in this state of abstraction twelve months, and composed, during this period, the best of his works, the *Eyn-ul-Hikmut*, or "The Eye of Science."

CHAP. XX. he had acquired, was to destroy all the drinking and gambling houses in Bokharah. These are stated to have amounted to several thousands; and we are assured*, that so extraordinary was the veneration for the commands of this holy prince, that even those who were ruined by this act, aided in its accomplishment.

Some of the brothers of Beggee Jân had been slain; and the danger in which his family were placed, from an increasing spirit of revolt among their own followers, led them at last to join in the general request, that he would assume the government: but all was in vain, till the occurrence of a serious commotion in the capital, in which about a thousand citizens lost their lives, excited his compassion. Upon this occasion, the nominal king, Abdool Ghâzee Khan, and all the nobles, assembled; and, having come to the mosque where he dwelt, they compelled him to attend them to the tomb of his father, Ameer Daniel, and at that sacred spot he was solemnly invoked to support a falling state. Apparently overcome by the urgency of their entreaties, he promised to give his counsel and aid in the management of public affairs: but we are informed, that he withheld from active interference till Neâz Aly, a chief who had rebelled during the rule of his father, and seized upon the City of Shaher-e-subz, ventured to make an inroad upon the territories of Bokharah. This act roused his indignation so much, that he accepted the title of regent, and marched, at the head of a large army, to attack the invader; whom he not only forced to retreat from the territories of Bokharah, but to abandon some of those countries of which he had for some time been in possession. Beggee

* Persian MS.

Jân may, from this date, be deemed the actual ruler of the Usbegs; for though he never assumed any title but that of regent, and continued to pay a nominal obedience to Abdool Ghâzee Khan, he exercised, during the remainder of his life, an absolute and undisputed authority over his nation. No prince was ever more unanimously chosen to fill the seat of power; and his first care, after he assumed the government, was to show his gratitude to those by whom he had been elevated, by the establishment of some salutary regulations for the administration of justice, the collection of revenue, and the payment of the army.

The policy of Beggee Jân made him studiously reject all those claims to respect and obedience which he had inherited from his father, the Ameer Daniel; who had not only been, for a short period, the ruler of the Usbegs, but was the chief of a powerful tribe. His artful son knew too well the jealousies and the resentments with which such claims were associated, to desire that they should appear in any shape as the foundation of his authority; therefore, in framing regulations for the management of public affairs, he gave to every institution a shape suited to his own character; and he desired always to be considered as a religious recluse, that had been compelled by his countrymen to exercise regal power; but who was resolved, as far as the discharge of his duties would permit him, to maintain, amid all the temptations with which he was surrounded, the same life of rigid austerity and self-denial, as he should have passed if he had never been called from a cell to a throne. The splendid court at which the nobles of Bokharah had been accustomed to attend, was abolished; and in its place he established what may be termed a hall of justice, at which he sat as

CHAP. XX. president, aided by forty moollahs *, or learned men †. All who had complaints to make came to this hall; but the prosecutor was never allowed to speak unless the accused was present. No person, however high his rank, dared to refuse ‡ a summons to attend this court. A slave could cite his master before it. Beggee Jân, we are informed ||, listened with great patience to the statement of both parties; and, in all cases not criminal, he sent them away, with an advice to come to an amicable adjustment of their difference. If they did so, the cause terminated; if not, he took notes, at their reappearance, of the evidence produced; and these were given, with his opinion, to the moollahs, who were directed to prepare a fetwah, or decision, according to the holy law. The parties, even after this proceeding, had a week allowed them to accommodate their dispute; but if that period elapsed without their having done so, the sentence was passed, and became irrevocable.

Criminal justice was administered according to the Koran. Robbers were punished with death; thieves by the loss of their right hands; drunkards were publicly whipt; and the smoking of

* One Manuscript states, that these courts were only held on Mondays and Fridays. It also asserts, that each of these moollahs held in his hand a volume of Beggee Jân's works.

† These were supported by a daily stipend, paid from the fund for public charity; which, on account of its more sacred character, was made the general treasury of the empire.

‡ This is the case in all patriarchal governments, particularly among the Arabs. The Imaum of Muscat, a powerful prince, is compelled, by the usage of his country, to appear before the cauzy, or judge, of his own capital, if summoned by any one of his subjects, who deems himself aggrieved.

|| Persian MS.

tobacco* was forbidden under severe penalties. The most strict performance of their religious duties was enjoined to all classes: the police officers of the City of Bokharah, we are told†, were continually employed driving the inhabitants to the mosques to hear the stated prayers‡; and they were authorized to use their whips to awaken the devotion of the negligent‖. Any person desirous of improving himself in religious knowledge was admitted to the colleges of the city, and received daily subsistence. We can hardly credit the accounts given of the number of these students, who are said at one period to have exceeded thirty thousand.

Begee Jân abolished all duties except those upon foreign goods. No monopolies were suffered; and revenue was only collected from crown lands. But the Jizyât§, or "regulated tax upon infidels," was regularly exacted; and the Zukât¶, or "established charity," was

* The learned and religious among the Mahomedans are divided in their opinion regarding the legality of smoking tobacco, drinking coffee, &c. which have come into general use since the death of Mahomed. The more severe maintain, that, as these have an inebriating quality, they are virtually prohibited by the Koran.

† Persian MS.

‡ These are said five times a day.

‖ We are also informed, that each of these officers had a small book, which aided him in his interrogatories of those he met regarding their knowledge of the proper prayers; and if he found any one ignorant, he had a right to punish him.

§ A tax of thirty per cent upon their property was levied from Jews, Christians, and Hindoos.

¶ The term *Zukât* means literally *purification*. It is metaphorically applied to this sacred tax, as its payment is considered to purify and render legal the property on which it is paid. Its amount is two and a half per cent on personal property; but the rate of collecting it on different kinds of property varies, and no one is liable to be called upon who has not possessed the property on which it is assessed nearly twelve months.

CHAP. XX. levied upon all believers, not excepting the soldiers of the army, who had before been exempt from this burthen. The money that was collected was put into the treasury, which was also supplied by the Khums, or "fifth part of all plunder taken from the enemy." This holy ruler, in imitation of the Prophet Mahomed, claimed this share for the expenses of his government.

Abdool Ghâzee Khan, the nominal king, and his family, were supported by the produce of the royal estates. The feudal usage of paying chiefs for their military service, and that of their adherents, had long been established among the Usbegs; and the heads of the principal families possessed large estates, and had rights of pasture for themselves and followers on particular tracts of country. These grants were intended to provide for their subsistence: but Beggee Jân, when he obliged his soldiers to pay the tax of charity, enabled them to do so by giving them, according to their rank, a regular allowance in money*, which was paid from that public treasury to which they contributed. These institutions were in imitation of the usage of the Prophet Mahomed, and were meant to increase the veneration of the Usbegs for the character of their ruler, who gave, in his own person, an example of the most extraordinary frugality. He drew daily from the same fund from which he paid his soldiers, for the support of himself, his cook †, his servant, and his tutor, one tungâh each, (a coin about the value of five pence,) being the amount of the stipend allowed to the poorest student. The wife of Beggee

* He gave them on an average a pecuniary payment of five tomâns (about five pounds) per annum.

† He gave his cook the name or title of Helâl-Puz, or "the dresser of what was "lawful."

Jân, who was of the royal family, was allowed only three tungâhs*. This princess had a fortune of her own, that placed her above the necessity of receiving this pittance, which, however, she took daily, to please her husband, who often told her that it was too much. "That "which is actually necessary," Beggee Jân used to say to her, "is "alone lawful:" and when she remonstrated, he was wont to add, "Learn, lady, to be content with little, that thy God may be content "with thee." But the joy which the bigot felt at the birth of a son† made him break through the rigid economy of his domestic regulations. A sum of no less than five pieces of gold‡ were allotted for the daily subsistence of the mother and her infant; and an equal amount was given for the support of two other sons the moment they were born. Beggee Jân, by this and other acts, showed that he had determined to educate his children in the enjoyment of those luxuries which he affected to despise; for he allowed his family to reside in a palace, while he himself dwelt in a small unfurnished room, or rather cell, into which persons of all classes were admitted at all hours. He was generally clad in a coarse garment, and had the appearance of a common mendicant. This vestment was seldom changed but when he went to see his family, and then the skin of a deer was thrown loose over his shoulders.

The class of devotees to which Beggee Jân belonged, pride themselves not only on the contempt of dress, but of cleanliness: and a thousand anecdotes of this ruler prove that he was not above seeking

* Persian MS.

† The present monarch, Hyder Turrâh. The name of his mother was Yeldeez Begum: she is termed in the MS. the daughter of Abdool Ghâzee Khan.

‡ In value about five pounds.

CHAP. XX. fame, by a strict compliance with the most disgusting usages of this sect. We neither can nor ought to condemn a conduct which was so successful in enabling the extraordinary man by whom it was adopted to give union and strength to the distracted and hostile tribes of his nation. No sentiment short of that feeling of reverence, bordering upon adoration, with which the Usbegs regarded Beggee Jân, could have enabled him to accomplish the great objects he had in view; and all his knowledge, his firmness, and his justice, would have availed him nothing, had he not disarmed his enemies, and attached his adherents, by a life of privation, and the practice of the most rigid austerities. Ignorance and superstition are ever united; and the Tartars who followed the standard of Beggee Jân were easily persuaded, that a leader who contemned the worldly pleasures which they prized, and who preferred the patched mantle and crooked staff of a mendicant priest to a royal robe and sceptre, must act under the immediate direction of the Divine Being. Nor were their habits of a nature that made it easy for them to understand how any man, placed in such a situation, could, from any other motive, be content to resign those enjoyments which, in their minds, constituted the very essence and charm of regal power.

The impression which the Usbegs entertained of the sacred character of Beggee Jân, gave him a strength which soon enabled him to subdue almost the whole of the country* between the Oxus and Jaxartes. The army of this ruler was chiefly composed of horse; and the plan of war that he invariably adopted, was successive

* The City of Shaher-e-Subz, formerly called Kesch, opposed him for some years, but was at last taken, and its governor, Neâz Aly Khan, compelled to save himself by flight.

predatory invasions of the country attacked. After he had reduced almost all the tribes of his own nation to obedience, he was engaged in a war with Timour Shah, King of the Affghans, over whom he obtained some advantages; more, however, by his policy than by his arms.

The reduction of Merv by Beggee Jân has been already noticed. This conquest enabled him to invade Khorassan; and in the first year after it was accomplished, he advanced to Mushed: but finding it difficult to make himself master of that city, he informed its inhabitants, and his own army, that the holy Imaum Rezâ*, who was interred there, had appeared to him in a dream, and commanded him not only to spare the holy city, but its dependencies. In obedience to his pretended mandate, he refrained even from plundering the open suburbs and neighbouring villages; but he not only laid waste all those districts which were not deemed under the protection of the sacred city, but carried their inhabitants into bondage. Before he returned to Bokharah, he wrote circular letters to Shah Rokh Meerza, and to the other chiefs of Khorassan, informing them of his intention to revisit that province next season. He advised them to consult their own safety, and that of their subjects, by early submission, and by the adoption of the creed of the Soonees. "Your conversion," he stated in these letters, "will prove a blessing to you; and its occurrence will add to the number of the miracles that I have already performed."

A. D. 1794.
A. H. 1209.

* Beggee Jân told his followers, that the daily supplications made to the Imaum by the distressed inhabitants, deprived that sacred personage of sleep. "I know," said he, "that the Imaum liveth, and he shall not have to reproach me with disturbing his rest."

CHAP. XX.

Beggee Jân, from this period till that of his death, made annual inroads into Khorassan. The heavy baggage, with a part of the army, were left several marches in the rear; while the advance, consisting wholly of cavalry, spread over the country. Every man of this corps carried seven days' provision for himself and horse; and their object was, by a sudden attack, either to surprise the forts or walled villages, or to make prisoners of all the inhabitants that were travelling or labouring in the fields. These, if not ransomed, they carried into bondage; and the spoil in general consisted equally of men, women, cattle, sheep, and grain. The leader of the Usbegs usually succeeded in extorting a considerable sum of money from those towns which he could not reduce; for as the invasion always took place before the harvest, a refusal to comply with this demand was followed by the instant destruction of every field within the reach of his followers. The plunder obtained on these expeditions was, we are told, fairly divided. A fifth part of all that was taken belonged to their ruler, and constituted, as has been before stated, a considerable part of his revenue. Beggee Jân always led his own troops. He generally rode at the head of the army, dressed like a religious man of the poorest class, and mounted upon a small poney. He maintained, we are informed*, a strict discipline in his camp: but this means no more than that there was a good police, and that his soldiers yielded a prompt and implicit obedience to his orders. Attention to the duties of religion was, even amid these scenes of violence, rigidly enforced; and a number of moollahs, or priests, marched

* Persian MS.

with every division. These holy men were sent, when occasion required, as envoys to negotiate with the chiefs whose territories were attacked. They were fitted for this employ from their superior education; and they were protected by their sacred character from those insults and dangers to which persons of any other class would have been exposed.

The policy of Beggee Jân, while it led him to condemn himself to every privation, made him desire to be surrounded with splendour; and nothing could present a greater contrast, than the mean and disgusting appearance of this extraordinary man, and all that personally appertained to him, with the display of wealth and magnificence made by his nobles and his principal officers. The writer of one of those tracts from which we have taken his history, was in the employ of Mameish Khan, chief of Chinnaran, when Beggee Jân invaded Khorassan. He informs us, that he was deputed to the camp of the invaders; and has given, in the form of a journal, a very curious account of his mission. A. D. 1794. A. H. 1209.

Mameish Khan, it appears from this memoir, was in correspondence with Ishân Nukeeb*, a noble of high rank among the Usbegs, and a great favourite of their ruler. To this chief he gave his envoy a letter, with charge of two colts; the one to be presented to his friend, the other to Beggee Jân. But the particulars of his mission will be best told in the words of this intelligent writer.

* Ishân Nukeeb-ul-Ashrâff, or "the illustrious," was the son of Ishân Mukdoom, the chief of Juzâk, who had married the daughter of Ameer Daniel. Ishân Mukdoom was consequently the nephew of Beggee Jân, with whom he was always a great favourite.

CHAP. XX.

"I was introduced," he observes, "to Ishân Nukeeb, who was "seated at the further end of a magnificent tent. He was a man "of handsome appearance, uncommonly fair, but had a thin beard*. "He asked after my health, and then after that of Mameish Khan; "adding, 'Why has he not come himself?' On my making some "excuse, he added, 'I understand the reason: had I been alone, "he would have paid me a visit, but he is afraid of Beggee Jân.' "After these observations, he rose and retired to another tent, desir-"ing me to repose myself where I was. A rich sleeping dress was "brought me, and every person went away: but I had hardly laid "down when I was sent for to attend Ishân Nukeeb, who very "graciously insisted upon my dining with him. The repast was "luxurious: and an hour after dinner tea was brought, and the "favourite drank his in a cup of pure gold, ornamented with "jewels. The cup given to me was of silver, inlaid with gold. "Three hours after noon, he carried me to a large tent with five "poles, where a number of persons were saying their prayers: we "did the same; and afterwards returned to his tent, which we had "hardly entered, when a servant in waiting announced Utkhoor "Sooffee. This religious personage, for such he was, from the "moment he entered occupied all the attention of Ishân Nukeeb, "who appeared to treat him with the profoundest respect; and, "when tea and coffee were served, he held the cup while Utkhoor "Sooffee drank. We had not sat long, before an officer came "into the tent, and told Ishân Nukeeb that Beggee Jân desired

* This Tartar feature is deemed by the Persians a great deformity: the beard cannot, according to their idea of manly beauty, be too long and bushy.

" that he would wait upon him, and bring his guest. The mo-" ment this intimation was made, we arose, mounted our horses, " and proceeded with him. After riding a short distance we " came to a one pole tent, which I judged, from its size and " tattered appearance, to belong to some cooks, or water-carriers. " An old man was seated on the grass, so near it as to be pro-" tected from the sun by its shade. Here all dismounted, and " advanced towards the old man, who was *clothed in green*, but " very dirty. When near him, they stood with their hands crossed, " in a respectful posture, and made their salutation. He returned " that of each person, and desired us to sit down opposite to " him. He appeared to show great kindness to Ishân Nukeeb, " but chiefly addressed his conversation to *Utkhoor Sooffee* *.

" After some time, the subject of my mission was introduced. " I gave my letter to Ishân Nukeeb: he presented it to the old " man in green, who, I now discovered, was Beggee Jân. That " ruler opened it, read it, and put it in his pocket. After a short " pause, he said, 'No doubt Mameish Khan has sent me a good " horse;' and desired him to be brought. After looking attentively " at the animal, he began to whisper and to laugh with those near " him: then addressing himself to me, said, 'Why has not your " master sent the horse, Kârrâ-Goz †, as I desired?—' That horse

* The author states, that Beggee Jân spoke to the Sooffee at times like a very young, and at others like a very old man; by which he means, that there was a mixture of the gay and grave in his conversation.

† Kârrâ-Goz means " black eye." It is usual to give names to high bred horses in Persia.

CHAP. XX. " has defects,' I replied, ' or he would have been sent.'—' With all " his defects,' said Beggee Jân, smiling, ' he is twenty times better " than the one you have brought.'

" While we were conversing, a great number of nobles came in; " and I could not help observing the extraordinary richness and " splendour of their arms and dresses. Beggee Jân returned the " salute of every one of these in a kind and affable manner, and " bade them be seated: but the shade of his small tent did not pro- " tect one half of them from the rays of the sun. Soon after their " arrival, their chief fell into a deep reverie; and, till evening prayers " were announced, he appeared wholly absorbed in religious con- " templation. At the time of prayer all arose, and retired. I slept " that night at the tent of Ishân Nukeeb. At day light the army " marched, and passed within a few miles of the Fort of Chinnaran. " After Beggee Jân had reached his encampment, he sent for me, " and honoured me with a private audience, at which he was very " affable. ' Your master, Mameish Khan, is, I hear, always drinking " wine.'—' I have not seen him drink,' I replied, ' and cannot speak " to that point.'—' You are right,' said he, ' not to state what you " have not seen. Tell Mameish Khan,' he continued, ' I have a " regard for him: but as to Nâdir Meerza, (the ruler of Mushed,) he " is a fool. Bid Mameish Khan,' he added, ' write to Jaaffer Khan, " of Nishapore, and advise that chief to solicit my friendship, " if he wishes to save his country from destruction.' After this ob- " servation a handsome dress was brought for me, with a present in " money. Every article of the dress was good, except the turban, " which was of little or no value. This, however, Beggee Jân took

" himself, giving me his own in exchange*, which was a great deal " worse than the one brought for me. I took my leave, and re- " turned to the tent of Ishân Nukeeb, to whom I repeated all that " had passed. He laughed very heartily at the account, made me " a handsome present; and I was on the point of retiring, when two " men came, at full gallop, with a letter from Mameish Khan, " stating, that, notwithstanding the protection he had received, some " of his followers had been taken by the Usbegs. Ishân Nukeeb " took me again to Beggee Jân, whom we found seated in his small " tent, upon a goat's skin. He directed the captives to be brought, " and made them over to me. He had before written a letter to " Mameish Khan, which he reopened, wrote what he had done, and " again committed it to my charge. As this affair was settling, his " cook, a diminutive person, with weak eyes, came into the tent. " 'Why do not you think of dinner?' said Beggee Jân, 'it will soon " be time for prayer.' The little cook immediately brought a large " black pot, and, making a fire-place with stones, put four or five " kinds of grain, and a little dried meat, into it. He then nearly " filled it with water; and, having kindled a fire, left it to boil, while " he prepared the dishes: these were wooden platters, of the same " kind as are used by the lowest orders. He put down three, and " poured out the mess. Beggee Jân watched him; and the cook " evidently understood, from his looks, when more or less was

* The exchange of turbans is, in Asia, deemed a pledge of friendship. If the author of this Memoir has not been led, by vanity, into exaggeration, there cannot be a more remarkable proof of that humility which Beggee Jân affected, than his exchanging his turban with one allotted as a present to the envoy of an insignificant chief.

CHAP. XX. " to be put into a dish. After all was ready, he spread a dirty " cloth, and laid down a piece of stale barley bread *, which Beggee " Jân put into a cup of water to moisten. The first dish was given " to the ruler of the Usbegs, the second was placed between Ishân " Nukeeb and me, and the cook took the third for himself, sitting " down to eat it opposite to his master. As I had dined, I " merely tasted what was put before me. It was very nauseous, " the meat in it being almost putrid: yet several nobles, who came " in, ate the whole of our unfinished share, and with an apparent " relish, that could only have been derived from the pleasure they " had in partaking of the same fare with their holy leader.

" After dinner I obtained leave to depart. On my return to " Chinnaran, Mameish Khan was pleased with the result of my " mission: but he afterwards informed me, that, notwithstanding the " fair promises of Beggee Jân, eighty-two of his people were, during " this season, carried away by the Usbegs."

The above account is alike descriptive of the character of Beggee Jân, and of that of his court. It also shows the nature of his annual invasions of Khorassan; and exhibits a picture of despotic power, under a very disgusting but imposing garb. This artful and able ruler fully succeeded in the great object of his life: for at his death, which happened a few years after the events that have been recorded, his eldest son, Hyder Turrâh, ascended the throne of Bokharah, and assumed, as his father had always intended, both the name and dignity of a sovereign.

* The author adds, " God knows in what year of the Hejirah this bread had been " baked."

CHAP. XX.

The army of Beggee Jân is said to have amounted to sixty thousand horse; but in his invasions of Khorassan he was seldom attended by more than half that number. Though occasionally severe, his administration was, upon the whole, lenient and just. He never assumed the title of king. On the seal which he generally used, his name, Ameer Maassoom, the son of the Ameer Daniel, was engraven in the centre; and round it was inscribed the following sentence:—"Power and dignity, when founded on justice, are from "God; when not, from the devil."

The union of the various tribes of the Usbegs under Beggee Jân, and the exaggerated reports of the character and success of that ruler, had spread such alarm over every province of Persia, that all who were unbiassed by family or feudal feelings, rejoiced in that termination of internal wars, which had raised an able and warlike monarch to the throne, and placed their country in a condition to resist invasion; for the recollection of the glory of the best of those conquerors who had issued from the plains of Tartary was associated with scenes of rapine and of death. And though Persia had attained its greatest happiness* and splendour under some of their descendants; men, who had the prospect of being swept away by the mighty torrent, could find little consolation in the hope that it might, when its destructive waves had subsided, tend to improve and fructify the soil over which it had passed.

* There can be no doubt that the happiest and most glorious era of Persian history was when that country was governed by the first monarchs of the Seljookian dynasty of Tartar princes.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Life of Aga Mahomed Khan, Kujur, the Uncle and Predecessor of the present King: with a brief Notice of the principal Events which have occurred since the Elevation of the reigning Monarch.

CHAP. XXI. MANY events of the Life of Aga Mahomed Khan have been necessarily anticipated: but the interest which attaches to his extraordinary character, and the claim he has upon our attention, not only as the founder of a dynasty, but as the uncle and immediate predecessor of the reigning monarch, calls for a short retrospect of those causes which enabled him to attain the throne of Persia.

The history of the tribe to which he belonged has been before given. When they were settled in Armenia, the accidental circumstance of one part of this tribe having their pasture ground higher on a river in that province than another, first separated them into two branches, which were termed "the higher" and "the "lower *." These two great divisions were subdivided into many smaller ones. Some families took their names from a chief, or from a village †, near which they fed their flocks. When the Kujurs

* The Youkhâree-bâsh and Ashâkâ-bâsh.—*Persian MS.*

† Thus the Kujurs of Duwânloo took their name from Duwânloo, a village near Erivân, in the vicinity of which they were long encamped.

Engraved by C. Heath.

AGA MAHOMED KHAN.

From an Original Persian Painting.

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were divided, and sent to different quarters of the empire, by the policy of one of the Suffavean monarchs, the most considerable part of the tribe was settled at Asterabad*. This body consisted of families of both branches; and the heads of the Youkhâree, or "the higher," were considered as the first in rank, till Futteh Aly Khan, who belongs to the Ashâkâ, or "the lower," was nominated general of the forces of Tâmâsp the Second. His station in the empire enabled this chief to assume the superiority in his tribe, but his right was reluctantly admitted; and, when he was put to death by Nâdir Shah, those who deemed themselves aggrieved by his usurpation, rejoiced in his fall; and they endeavoured to involve his only surviving son †, Mahomed Hussein Khan, in his ruin. The young chief was compelled to fly to the Turkoman tribes, who dwell in the plains to the east of the Caspian. Several of his family ‡ followed him into banishment; and he was enabled to carry on a petty warfare with his enemies, whom he would probably soon have overcome, had they not been supported by Nâdir Shah and his immediate descendants.

Adil Shah, the nephew and immediate successor of Nâdir, when he established himself in Mazenderan, sent for two infant sons of Mahomed Hussein, who had some time before been made

* The Zeâd-oghloo, or sons of Zeâd, have continued at Ganjah since the time of Abbas the Great. Their chief, Juâd Khan, was slain by the Russians.

† Futteh Aly Khan had two sons, Mahomed Hussein Khan, and Mahomed Hussun Khan: the latter died young.

‡ Among these was Alyverdy Khan, the father of Nouroze Khan, the Yeshkâ-gâssee-bâshee, or lord of requests to the reigning king.

CHAP. XXI. A. D. 1747. A. H. 1160.

Aga Mahomed Khan is made prisoner, and emasculated.

prisoners, and had the barbarity to command that the eldest*, Aga Mahomed, then a child between five and six years of age, should be made an eunuch. This act of cruelty was meant to destroy every hope of the accomplishment of that very end which it ultimately promoted; for, by depriving the future representative of a great family of the power of partaking of those sensual enjoyments which, in eastern countries, too often enervate both the body and mind of those who have, from their rank and condition, the means of unbounded indulgence, the individual was forced to seek gratification from other sources; and the exclusive attention of Aga Mahomed, from his most early years, appears to have been directed to views of ambition and aggrandizement, which he pursued through life with a callous perseverance and an unrelenting severity, that at once marked the insensibility of his nature, and the deep impression made upon his mind by a recollection of early wrongs.

Obtains his release, and joins his father.

Aga Mahomed, after the death of Adil Shah, had obtained his release and joined his father, whom he accompanied, while yet a youth, through all the vicissitudes of his fortune. When his father was defeated and slain, he fell into the power of Kurreem Khan, by whom he was latterly treated with great kindness and indulgence. The whole of that time which he passed as a

Falls into the hands of Kurreem Khan.

* His name was Mahomed Khan; the title of Aga, or master, which is one of considerable respect, was always given to the principal eunuchs of the royal haram. It became, in consequence of this usage, the appellation of the young prince after he was emasculated; and he continued to be distinguished by it through life.

prisoner at Shiraz was employed in preparing himself, by the study of men and books, for the great scene in which he was destined to act: and his mind was so matured before Kurreem Khan's death, that that ruler used often to consult him in affairs of state*. Aga Mahomed did not withhold his counsel, though he cherished the most implacable hatred to the whole of the Zund family. He often related an anecdote †, which displays his feelings at this period, and gives an insight into his extraordinary character. "I had no power," he said, "of declaring openly "that spirit of revenge which I always harboured against the "murderers of my father, and the despoilers of my inheritance: "but while I sat with Kurreem Khan in his hall of public as-"sembly, I often employed myself in cutting his fine carpets "with a pen-knife which I concealed under my cloak, and my "mind felt some relief in doing him in this secret manner all the "injury I could." At the time Aga Mahomed Khan mentioned this action of his early life, the carpets that he had tried to destroy were become his own; and he used to add, "I am now "sorry for what I did: it was foolish, and showed a want of "foresight."

The misfortunes of the early life of Aga Mahomed Khan had not only taught him patience, but rendered him a profound adept

* Kurreem Khan, we are informed, used to call him Peeran-wisa. This celebrated minister of Afrasiab, it has been before mentioned, was the Nestor of the Turks; and the highest encomium that can be passed on the political wisdom of an individual is to call him by his name.

† This anecdote was related to me by Hajee Ibrahim, who was, for many years, the sole minister of Aga Mahomed Khan.

CHAP. XX. in the art of dissimulation; and during the very period that he cherished sentiments of the most inveterate resentment against Kurreem Khan and all his family, he had so won upon the confidence of that ruler, that he not only gave him a liberal allowance to live upon, the freedom of going wherever he chose in the city, and the use of his best horses, with liberty to hunt over the neighbouring country, but proposed to employ him in quelling a rebellion that his brother, Hussein Aly Khan, had excited in the province of Mazenderan. Meerza Jaaffer, the minister of Kurreem Khan, prevented the execution of this design; and Aga Mahomed Khan had the generosity, when Sovereign of Persia, to mark, by his kindness to the relations of the minister, his gratitude for his conduct *. " Meerza Jaaffer," he observed, " acted from no feel-" ing but that of attachment to his master: he, nevertheless, saved " my life; for had I been sent to Mazenderan, I should have " been placed under circumstances that would have compelled me " to rebel; and the power of Kurreem Khan was so great, that " I must have been destroyed."

A. D. 1779. A. H. 1193. His escape from Shiraz.

The manner in which Aga Mahomed Khan made his escape † from Shiraz, on the occurrence of Kurreem Khan's death, has been already noticed: he fled with almost incredible speed to Mazenderan, and immediately declared himself independent. He was at this period thirty-six years of age. Though his frame was slender, he was, from his frugal diet and his habits of exercise,

* MS. History of Aga Mahomed Khan.

† He reached the City of Isfahan on the third day of his flight. The distance is about two hundred and fifty-one miles.

capable of suffering any fatigue or hardship. He might be said to live on horseback; for every moment that he could spare from other occupations was given to the chase, which was, in fact, his only amusement. His heart is said to have been as hardened as his body: but the natural severity of his temper was, during the whole of his progress to that sovereign power which he attained, after a struggle of eighteen years, checked by his prudence, which led him not only to conciliate his friends by kindness, but to forget his wrongs, and even to forgive some of the most inveterate of his personal enemies. We cannot praise too highly the wisdom which induced this ruler, when he had the power of revenge, to pardon those chiefs of the hostile branch of the Kujurs who had not only been concerned in the murder of his father, and other relations, but who had delivered him over, when a helpless infant, to those cruel hands that had deprived him of his title to the name of man, and had rendered him, with all his power, an object of pity to the lowest of his subjects. The generous policy which terminated the blood feud that had so long subsisted among the Kujurs, gave the throne of Persia to the chiefs of that tribe; and Aga Mahomed continued too sensible of the importance of the union which he had established, ever to disturb it by the recollection of past injuries. He obtained attachment by bestowing confidence: and among those who were most honoured in his government, were persons from whom he had received the greatest insults* in his hours of adversity.

* Some of those chiefs continue to enjoy the favour and confidence of his successor, the reigning monarch.

CHAP. XXI.

When Aga Mahomed fled from Shiraz, he was only attended by seventeen followers. He refused to halt at Isfahan, though invited to do so; but he rested one night near Teheran, and was kindly treated by the governor of that city*. The moment he entered the province of Mazenderan†, he was joined by a number of his tribe, who acknowledged him as their chief: but he soon discovered that he had the most serious opposition to expect from his own family. Some of his brothers‡ declared against him; and one of them, Moorteza Kooli, who had assembled a body of troops, proclaimed himself king. A petty war was carried on for four years with various fortune. Aga Mahomed, though at first successful, was surprised and made captive at Balfrosh, through the treachery of his brother, Rezâ Kooli, who loaded him with chains, and deliberated whether he should deprive him of sight, or put him to death‖. His prisoner had, however, secret friends among those employed to guard him; and their exertions, combined with the efforts of his two brothers, Jaaffer Kooli and Moostâphâ Kooli, who remained faithful to his interests, restored him to liberty and power. His brother, Rezâ Kooli, who was compelled to fly, retired to Mushed,

Enters Mazenderan, and is joined by a number of his own tribe.

Some of his brothers declare against him.

A. D. 1781. A. H. 1196. He is surprised, and made captive.

Is liberated.

* Meerza Aly Nuckee.

† Aga Mahomed was so fortunate as to intercept a part of the revenue of Mazenderan, which was proceeding under a weak convoy to Shiraz.

‡ Aga Mahomed had five brothers. Their names were Moorteza Kooli Khan, Rezâ Kooli Khan, Moostâphâ Kooli Khan, Jaaffer Kooli Khan, and Mehdy Kooli Khan. These were only half brothers of Aga Mahomed Khan, being by a different mother. His own brother, Hussein Kooli Khan, had been put to death by the Turkomans, when he fled from Zuckee Khan. Hussein Kooli had left two sons, of whom the reigning monarch was the eldest.

‖ Moollah Mahomed's History of the Kujurs.

where he died. Moorteza Kooli soon afterwards took refuge in Russia, where he became the instrument of the ambitious designs of the Empress Catherine.

Collects troops and enters Irak.

It has been before stated, that the moment Aga Mahomed received intelligence of the death of Aly Moorad Khan, he collected all the troops he could, and entered Irak. His army increased as he advanced: and the flight of Jaaffer Khan enabled him to make himself master of Isfahan without a battle; for the skirmish he had at Kashan does not deserve that name. When compelled to retreat by the defection of part of his army, instead of returning to Mazenderan, he occupied himself in repairing the fortifications of Teheran*; which city he appears, at this period, to have resolved to make his capital: a measure to which he was induced, from its vicinity to Mazenderan, and its centrical situation amid the pasture lands of those Turkish tribes on whose support he chiefly depended.

A. D. 1786.

Becomes master of Isfahan.

Makes Teheran his capital.

A. D. 1788.

Is joined by several powerful chiefs.

Several of the most powerful chiefs of Aderbijan, Kurdistan, and Irak, had joined the standard of Aga Mahomed Khan: some still wavered in their allegiance between him and Jaaffer Khan; while others, presuming on the numbers of their followers, cherished hopes that the struggle between the Kujur and Zund tribes might yet produce events favourable to their own views of ambition. In his conduct towards these nobles, Aga Mahomed exhibited the most profound dissimulation. His real object was to destroy all whom he could not hope to attach; but he always tried every expedient that art could suggest for the accomplishment of his purpose before he

* The citadels of Persian walled towns are called by the name of Argh, or "ark." They are generally square, with very high walls, which are flanked by lofty turrets.

CHAP. XXI.

Invites Aly Khan Affshâr to join him.

had recourse to violence. Aly Khan, a chief of the Affshâr tribe, had shown a disposition to aspire to the throne, and had assembled a number of followers in Aderbijan. Aga Mahomed, instead of treating him as an enemy, addressed a letter to him as an equal, in which he invited him to a meeting, and called upon him, by their affinity as chiefs of Turkish tribes, to combine for the destruction of the princes of the Zund family. Aly Khan, though a sensible and brave man, dreaded his designing character; and preferring a state of open hostility to so dangerous a friendship, he declined complying with his request; and, in the expectation of an attack, awaited his approach on the plains of Sultaneah*. Aga Mahomed marched towards him, apparently with an intention of giving him battle: but, when their armies met, he sent one of his brothers, accompanied only by two horsemen, to the camp of Aly Khan, to whom he delivered the following artful message in the hearing of all his officers and attendants. "I am desired," said he, "by Aga Mahomed Khan, to ask why two brave Turkish tribes should give "delight to their enemies by shedding each other's blood? Let the "Affshârs enjoy their present lands, their chief, his government†, and "continue united with the Kujurs in bonds of friendship, which must "tend to their mutual advancement, and the destruction of all their "enemies." This overture made some impression upon the chief to whom it was addressed, and more upon his followers. It led to further negotiation, in which Aga Mahomed prevailed, and Aly Khan consented to be the first noble of his court. The army he had assembled was retained; and he was himself treated with such

Who refuses.

Aga Mahomed Khan marches against him.

His message to Aly Khan.

Aly Khan joins the standard of Aga Mahomed

* Persian MS. † The Khumsâ, or five districts, of which Zunjân is the capital.

extraordinary regard, and even confidence, that all his alarms vanished. When completely lulled into a fatal security, he was invited to a convivial entertainment given by one of the principal persons of the court; and late at night, when inebriated with wine, he received a message from Aga Mahomed, intimating, that he desired to consult with him immediately on a subject of some importance. He hastened to obey the summons; and, as it was urgent, he would not even wait to put on his arms. The unguarded chief was seized the moment he entered the palace, and had his eyes put out, without any one of his adherents knowing what had happened. Part of his troops were, next morning, disbanded, and part taken into the service of Aga Mahomed. The whole of this transaction was conducted in a manner that prevented the loss of a life, or the slightest disturbance. The deep treachery which had deceived and destroyed a gallant rival, was dignified by flatterers with the name of justifiable policy: and there can be no doubt, that the impression of terror, which was made on a number of ambitious nobles by the fate of Aly Khan, greatly promoted the success of his artful and cruel enemy.

Is treacherously seized, and his eyes put out.

The events that occurred in the war which Aga Mahomed Khan carried on against Jaaffer Khan, and his son, Lootf Aly, have been related. The massacre of the inhabitants of Kerman was one of the most dreadful of all his acts. The pillage of that town continued nearly three days: but, as it was stopped the moment that intelligence was received of Lootf Aly having been made prisoner, we must conclude that Aga Mahomed, in this, as in almost all instances, acted less from passion than policy: he believed that his enemy had escaped, and meant, by a terrible example, to prevent

Aga Mahomed Khan's contests with Jaaffer Khan and Lootf Aly.

The massacre of the inhabitants of Kerman.

A. D. 1794.
A. H. 1208.

CHAP. XXI. any of the other cities or provinces of Persia granting him their support.

In surveying the life of a monarch like Aga Mahomed Khan, we should guard ourselves against those impressions, which the particular view of many of his actions is so calculated to make upon the mind. Accustomed to live under a government protected by laws, we associate cruelty and oppression with every act of a despot. His executions are murders; and the destruction of helpless citizens (who in an assault too generally share the fate of the soldiers by whom their walls have been defended,) is deemed a horrid massacre: but we must not assume that justice is always violated, because the form of administering it is repugnant to our feelings: and we should recollect, that even among civilized nations, the inhabitants of towns which are taken by storm are exposed to pillage and slaughter, without any charge of barbarity being made against those by whom they are plundered, or put to the sword. The punishment of bodies of men, to deter others of similar condition from equal guilt, is, perhaps, the only mode by which uncivilized nations can be preserved in peace. When martial clans, united in name, in feeling, and in action, are so devoted to the family of their leaders, that neither imprudence nor crime can absolve their allegiance, it becomes impossible to take away power from their chief, without depriving his devoted followers of the means of opposition or revenge; and it is only by making examples of whole classes of his rebellious subjects, that an absolute monarch, who rules over a warlike and turbulent people, can expect to strike that terror which is indispensable to preserve himself upon the throne, and to establish the internal tranquillity of his dominions.

The extraordinary rise of Nâdir Shah, and of Kurreem Khan, had destroyed that sacred regard for the royal family, which had so powerfully protected the weakest of the Suffavean monarchs. Every leader who had followers, thought that chance might give him the crown. The usurpation of the name of king was so common, that the title was no longer held in respect; and men, amid the continual change of rulers, had lost their habits of obedience to the only paramount authority that was recognised by the usages of the country. This is no overcharged picture: and it may be affirmed, that when the success of Aga Mahomed Khan obtained him the rule of Persia, that kingdom was in a state of complete anarchy. The chiefs of the principal tribes cherished plans of inordinate ambition. Their followers, accustomed to scenes of revolt and of plunder, were adverse to any power which deprived them of their harvest of spoil. The towns and villages had been pillaged so often, that many of their inhabitants, compelled to abandon their homes, sought relief in the practice of that violence by which they had been ruined; while others became voluntary exiles from their country. Commerce had greatly declined; for, independent of the hazards which merchants incurred from the upstart rulers of the day, the public roads were infested by plunderers, who seized upon all property that they found unguarded.

Condition of Persia at the accession of Aga Mahomed Khan.

There never was a character so formed to remedy the evils which have been described as Aga Mahomed Khan. The flatterers, who have praised his justice, have admitted that he had no mercy. Punishment, these argue, was never wantonly inflicted: but the guilty were never spared. His object was to restore Persia to a state of tranquillity; and to effect that, he resolved to destroy all

Conduct pursued by Aga Mahomed Khan to establish his power.

CHAP. XXI. whom he deemed in any way likely to disturb the peace of the kingdom. He had, as has been shown, forgiven some of the most inveterate of his enemies: but when policy did not require him to renounce his resentments, he seemed prone to the most implacable and extravagant revenge. This disposition of his mind was particularly shown after his triumph over Lootf Aly Khan. Not satisfied with putting to death or depriving of sight* all the relations of that prince, he had the savage barbarity to dig up the bones of the virtuous Kurreem Khan, and to direct their removal to Teheran; where they were, with those of Nâdir Shah, (which were subsequently brought from Khorassan,) deposited at the entrance of the palace †, that he might enjoy the gratification of every day trampling upon the graves of two of the principal foes of his family. Such an act could have excited no feelings except those of disgust and indignation: but on this occasion, that policy which usually regulated the conduct of Aga Mahomed Khan, gave way to a callous malignity of mind, which, by long brooding on past injuries, appears to have found delight in a base triumph over the remains of his enemies, and in the degrading and unmanly indulgence of a posthumous and impotent revenge.

Every action of Aga Mahomed Khan was calculated to inspire dread among the higher ranks of his subjects: but though severe to

* Zeen-ul-abdeen's Anecdotes.

† A Persian poet had the boldness to write a satirical epigram upon this sacrilegious act. " The malice of revenge had," he said, " been disappointed; and the " sacred depository of the remains of the virtuous Kurreem Khan was, by the just " decree of Providence, constantly illuminated by his enemies." This was, in fact, the case; for the place where he was interred being the entrance of the palace, had lamps burning in it throughout the night.

all who exercised power, whether derived from birth or from station, he was kind and indulgent to his soldiers, and to the mass of the population; and every step he took to spread the terror of his name, and to secure the crown for his family, promoted their happiness and prosperity. This prince showed, on every occasion, a perfect knowledge of the characters of those by whom he was surrounded. We have a remarkable instance of this in his conduct to Hajee Ibrahim. When he was encamped in Kerman, and that minister was proceeding to join him, one of the royal guards, who met the latter on the road, behaved to him with extreme insolence. The Hajee directed some of his followers to seize the man and chastise him: and it was in vain that those who were with him begged that he would refrain from an act which would, they conceived, inevitably produce his ruin. "If Aga Mahomed Khan," said he sternly, "is capable of countenancing, by his protection, "the insolence of a fellow like this to a man of my rank, the "sooner I am destroyed the better." When he arrived in camp, he found that the monarch had been informed of the transaction. At their first meeting, he exclaimed, "So you have punished one of my servants, Hajee? I am grateful to you for *having* "done so: you are exactly the person I require to keep these "rascals in order!" A short personal knowledge confirmed all the favourable impressions he had received of the talents of Hajee Ibrahim; and he early resolved upon making him prime minister. No measure of his reign contributed more to his success than the employment of this extraordinary man, whose genius was suited to the high office to which he was raised, and who continued, while Aga Mahomed lived, to merit and enjoy the unbounded favour and confidence of that sovereign.

CHAP. XXI.

Three of Aga Mahomed Khan's brothers, who were competitors for the throne, had fled from Persia. Another *, whom he suspected of designs against his person, was deprived of sight. There remained only Jaaffer Kooli Khan, to whose courage and enterprise he was, in a great degree, indebted for his crown. This prince had always preserved his allegiance, and had been, on several occasions, the successful mediator of peace between Aga Mahomed and other parts of his family. Though he was known to be ambitious, there never was any cause to believe that he cherished designs against his elder brother; but it was not expected he would grant equal submission to his nephew, whom that monarch had publicly declared the heir to the throne. Jaaffer Kooli had asked his brother to give him the government of Isfahan: but his request had been refused; and he was subsequently appointed to the rule of a district in Mazenderan. Irritated at this treatment, which he suspected to proceed from a doubt of his fidelity, he tried, by excuses, to evade a summons to attend at court. Aga Mahomed was greatly alarmed at this symptom of disaffection: he dreaded the valour of Jaaffer Kooli, and feared an open rupture with a chief, who was the idol of the soldiers of his own tribe, and towards whom any suspicion or harshness on his part must appear as the blackest ingratitude. Actuated by these considerations, he had recourse to art, and prevailed upon his mother † to go to Mazen-

His conduct towards his brother, Jaaffer Kooli Khan

* Moostâphâ Kooli Khan.

† Olivier states, that Aga Mahomed Khan went himself to his brother, and regained his confidence by his humility and art. The violent temper of the brave Jaaffer Koolî, this author informs us, led him to load his brother with reproaches, which were patiently borne by the cool and designing monarch, who at last succeeded in lulling him into a fatal security. There is no difference in other points, except the king's visit to

deran to try and appease her son: he desired her to promise him the government of Isfahan, or any thing that would restore him to confidence and friendship. All he required, he said, was, that the brother he loved would come to Teheran, on his way to Isfahan, and assure him of his forgiveness. The brave and generous Jaaffer Kooli, though deceived by these protestations, had still some hesitation in trusting himself in Aga Mahomed's power. He at last, however, consented; but not before he had received the most solemn assurances of safety, and a promise that he was only to stay one night at Teheran before he proceeded to his government. When he reached Teheran, he was welcomed with every appearance of cordiality; and the night passed in peace. Next day, Aga Mahomed Khan, after giving him some instructions regarding his conduct at Isfahan, observed: "You have not, I believe, yet looked at my "new palace; walk there with Bâbâ Khan, and after you have "seen it, return to me." He went to look at it; and at the moment he entered the portico, some assassins, who had been stationed there, fell upon him and slew him*. The body was carried to Aga Mahomed Khan, who mourned over it with an appearance of the most frantic grief. He desired Bâbâ Khan (the name by which he always called the present monarch, who was then quite

Who is prevailed on to come to court.

And treacherously murdered.

Mazenderan, between the relation of this traveller and the MS. that I have followed. The latter is written by one who professes to have been a witness of the whole transaction.

* In one account of this horrid transaction it is stated, that Bâbâ Khan (the present king, who was then a boy of fourteen,) was informed of what was intended, and directed to complain of slight indisposition, and remain in the rear when his uncle reached the part where the assassins were stationed.

CHAP. XXI.

a youth,) to approach. When near, he bade him observe the corpse of the bravest of men and the best of brothers. Then loading the young prince with abuse, he exclaimed: "It is for you I have done "this! The gallant spirit that lately animated that body would never "have permitted my crown to rest upon your head! Persia would "have been distracted with internal wars. To avoid these conse-"quences, I have acted with shameful ingratitude, and have sinned "deeply against God and man!" These sentiments might have been sincere: the public expression of them had the effect of mitigating the universal horror at this murder: and men either believed, or affected to believe, that a desire of promoting the general weal was paramount to all other feelings in the breast of their sovereign.

His conduct towards the Turkoman tribes near Asterabad.

The Turkoman tribes, who inhabit the plains near Asterabad, have been described. They had been friendly to the father of Aga Mahomed Khan, who always found a refuge among them when in distress. They gladly welcomed a fugitive of rank, whose name and followers aided them in plundering the neighbouring countries: but they had slain his brother, Hussun Kooli, when pursued by Zuckee Khan, and had recently committed the most cruel excesses upon the inhabitants of Asterabad. These acts of aggression and violence Aga Mahomed resolved to revenge: and, having marched into their country, he retaliated with a severity that even filled their savage minds with terror. He brought away a number of their wives and children, some of whom were made slaves, and the rest kept as hostages for the future good conduct of the families to which they belonged. We are informed by the historian of Aga Mahomed Khan, that many of the high-minded

women of these tribes perished by their own hands, to escape that captivity which they thought might subject them to insult or dishonour. CHAP. XXI.

The actual condition of the province of Georgia when Aga Mahomed Khan had, by the subjugation of Fars and Kerman, become the Sovereign of Persia, has been already noticed. The tributary prince of that country, the aged Heraclius, taking advantage of the distracted situation of Persia, had, by a formal act, transferred his allegiance from the kings of that country, whose paramount authority his ancestors had acknowledged for centuries, to the Sovereigns of Russia. His motive for this measure was declared to be a desire to release his Christian subjects from the violence and oppression of Mahomedan superiors, and to place them under the protection of a great nation of their own religion. It was not to be expected that any Monarch of Persia, whenever that country was restored to union and peace, would submit to have one of the finest provinces of the kingdom alienated by such a transfer: and Aga Mahomed Khan, the moment he had subdued his rivals, resolved to compel Heraclius to return to the path of obedience. But before an account is given of the measures which he adopted to re-establish his power over Georgia, it will be necessary to refer to the progress of the connexion which the prince of that country had formed with Russia, as that must be deemed the immediate cause which provoked the vengeance of the Persian sovereign.

Conduct of the Prince of Georgia.

Transfers his allegiance to the sovereigns of Russia.

Peter the Great had, in concert with the Court of Constantinople, formed plans for the partition of the north-western parts of

CHAP. XXI. Persia*. These projects had been defeated by the genius of Nâdir Shah: but the distracted state into which that kingdom had fallen, led the ambitious Catherine to revive in part the schemes of her renowned predecessor. She accepted the overtures of Heraclius to place his country under her protection; and a formal treaty† was

* Vide Vol. II. page 21.

† The following is the substance of this treaty:

Article 1st. Heraclius, the Prince of Georgia, renounces his dependence upon Persia, and places himself, heirs, and successors, under the protection of the Empress Catherine, her heirs and successors.

2d. The Empress Catherine grants her protection, and not only guarantees his actual possessions to the Prince of Georgia, but also all those which may become his in future partitions.

3d. The Prince of Georgia agrees that his heirs shall solicit and receive their investiture from the empress, her heirs, &c. and that they shall swear to be faithful to the Monarchs of Russia.

4th. The Prince of Georgia agrees that he will have no communication with neighbouring states except with the advice and knowledge of the Russian general commanding the forces, or the ambassador residing in his country.

5th. The ambassador whom the Prince of Georgia keeps at the empress's court is to have suitable rank.

6th. Her majesty the empress promises, for herself and successors, first, That she will regard the enemies of Georgia as her enemies; and that, in consequence, the people of that country will be included in any peace concluded with the Ottoman Porte, or any other state. Secondly; That she will maintain the Prince Heraclius and his heirs and posterity on the throne of Georgia: and thirdly, That she will leave wholly and entirely to the Prince of Georgia the internal administration of his country and the imposition of taxes.

7th. The Prince of Georgia promises, for himself and heirs, First, To be always ready with his army to serve the Empress of Russia. Secondly; To act in all that

concluded, by which that prince, in his own name, and that of his heirs, transferred his allegiance from the Kings of Persia to her and her successors; while she, on the part of herself and heirs, engaged to protect him and his people: and, by a specific article, she not only guaranteed to this prince all his actual possessions, but promised to extend the same protection to "other territories that might CHAP. XXI.

relates to her service with the advice of her commanders; to comply with their requisitions; and to guarantee her subjects against all injustice and oppression. Thirdly; To consider chiefly in the promotion of officers in his service those who have deserved well of Russia, because on that empire the safety and prosperity of Georgia depends.

8th. Her majesty the Empress of Russia consents that the first Archbishop of Georgia shall rank with the metropolitans of the eighth class, taking precedence after the Metropolitan of Tobolsk; and the empress is to give him the title of a member of "the Most Holy Synod."

9th. The nobles of Georgia shall, in every part of the Russian empire, enjoy the same prerogatives and advantages as the nobles of Russia.

10th. The inhabitants of Georgia to be at liberty to settle in Russia, and to return to their own country. The Georgian prisoners, who are released either by arms or capitulation, to return to their homes on paying what has been disbursed for their ransom or their expenses. The Prince of Georgia promises to act in the same manner towards those Russians who have been made captives by neighbouring states.

11th. Georgian merchants to pass and repass into Russia at pleasure, and to enjoy equal privileges with Russian merchants; and the Prince of Georgia promises to concert measures with the Russian generals to give more facility to the commerce carried on by Russians in his territories.

12th. The present convention or treaty to be for ever.

13th. The articles of this treaty to be ratified in six months, or sooner if possible.

Executed in the Fortress of Georges, the twenty-fourth of July, 1783.

Signed { PAUL POTEMKIN, PRINCE IVAN-BAGRATION,
PRINCE GARSEWAN-ISCHAWTS-CHAWDSEW.

CHAP. XXI. "hereafter fall to his share." The expression* of this article, and an attempt, which was made the same year in which the treaty was concluded, to form a settlement† near the City of Ashraff, in Mazenderan, gives reason to conjecture that Catherine cherished plans beyond an alliance with Heraclius: but, if this was the case, circumstances must have occurred which prevented their prosecution, as the settlement in Mazenderan was abandoned, and the corps which had been sent to aid the Georgian prince was, after it had remained four years, suddenly recalled, when employed at the siege of Gunjah, which was raised in consequence of its departure.

A. D. 1795. A. H. 1209. Aga Mahomed Khan, when he resolved upon the attack of Georgia, determined, by the celerity of his movements, to prevent Heraclius receiving support from Russia. The chiefs of his army had been directed, when he returned from the conquest of Kerman, to assemble, with all their followers, very early in the spring of the ensuing year: and we are informed, that the forces which met near

* It has been asserted, that this merely alluded to Gunjah and parts of Imeretta, which Heraclius claimed.

† The historian of the Kujur family states, that in the year 1783, a Russian nobleman, attended with some armed boats, arrived near Ashraff, and requested leave to establish a commercial factory in that quarter: but those who accompanied him, he adds, bought so dear and sold so cheap, that it was apparent pecuniary profit could not be their object. Aga Mahomed consequently suspected them of some sinister design, and directed them to be imprisoned. The same writer adds, that they were invited to a feast, and having drank freely of the liquor that was purposely given them, they were seized; but when sent to the king, he listened to their excuses, and not only released them, but gave them dresses of honour. He warned them, however, against evil designs.

Teheran, in the month of April *, were nearly sixty thousand men †. The object of their destination was unknown till the moment of their march, when they moved in three divisions. The right column took the route of Mogâm, Shirwan, and Dâghestan; the left moved towards Erivân, the capital of the province of Armenia; and the centre, at the head of which Aga Mahomed Khan placed himself, proceeded to Sheshâh, the principal fortress in the Kârâbâgh, a fine district, which stretches for many miles along the left bank of the Araxes ‡. The column which moved on the right, through the countries near the Caspian, met with no resistance. Every chief submitted or fled; but the khans of Erivân and Sheshâh were encouraged by Heraclius to oppose the Persian monarch: and the aged Waly himself, when summoned to appear at court, and pay the accustomed tribute, returned for answer, "That he acknowledged no "paramount sovereign but the Empress Catherine of Russia."

The governors of Erivân and Sheshâh submit to him.

A. D. 1795.
A. H. 1209.

Marches to Teflis.

The army of Aga Mahomed Khan was almost entirely composed of horse, and he could not hope to subdue either Erivân or Sheshâh: he resolved, therefore, to rest satisfied with the nominal submission of their governors, and to leave strong corps to watch, or rather blockade them; while he marched to Teflis, the capital of Georgia. He had before directed the centre and left columns to unite; and they were joined at Gunjah by the right division. With this army,

* The author of the History of the Kujurs states, that Aga Mahomed Khan marched from Teheran fifty-three days after the feast of Nouroze, or the vernal equinox, which corresponds with the fourteenth of May.

† Olivier states them to have amounted to eighty thousand.

‡ He passed the river on a bridge that had been constructed by Solimân Khan, whom he had sent in advance for that purpose.

CHAP. XXI. which, though reduced by the corps he had detached, still amounted to nearly forty thousand men, he advanced against Heraclius. That prince, though deprived, by the rapidity of the operations of Aga Mahomed, of the support of the Russians, nevertheless determined to meet the Persians in the field. He advanced with his whole force, which did not amount to one fourth of that of his enemy, to a position at the distance of fifteen miles from his capital. An action ensued; in which, we are told, the Georgians fought with great valour; but they were overpowered by numbers*, and compelled to fly. Their prince, with part of his family, and some followers, found refuge in the neighbouring mountains; while the conquerors entered Teflis, where a scene of carnage and rapine ensued that was pleasing to their sovereign, who desired to make this city an example to those who dared to contemn his authority. The Mahomedan historian of the Life of Aga Mahomed Khan, after describing the barbarous and horrid excesses which were committed, observes, "that on this glorious occasion the valiant warriors of "Persia gave to the unbelievers of Georgia a specimen of what they "were to expect on the day of judgment." It is not easy to calculate the number of those who perished in the massacre at Teflis. Bigotry inflamed the brutal rage of the soldier. The churches were levelled with the ground, and every priest that could be found was put to death†. Youth and beauty were alone spared, to become

Defeats Heraclius, and enters Teflis.

Orders a massacre.

* Aga Mahomed Khan, during this action, commanded a person to recite some verses from the Shah Namah of Ferdosi, to encourage the soldiers to heroic actions. This is a very common practice in Persian armies.—*Persian MS.*

† The author of the Life of Aga Mahomed Khan states, that the priests were bound and thrown into the river which flows past the town.

the slaves of their conquerors. Fifteen thousand captives * were led into bondage; and the army marched back, laden with spoil.

The condition of the unfortunate inhabitants, who had fled to escape death, and returned to mourn over their ruined houses and their desolated fields, was almost as severe as that of those who were made prisoners. The latter were less entitled to exclusive compassion, as slavery was the state to which many of them were doomed from their birth: and, if we except the great misfortune to which the younger captives † were exposed, of being educated in a different religion from that of their parents, their lot was not unhappy. The females, from their superior beauty, became in general the favourites of the harams to which they were destined; and some of them were married to their masters: while the males, according to the usage of the country, were in general treated with kindness and partiality. They almost invariably obtained their liberty when they embraced the religion of their conquerors; and were, as they grew up, either enrolled as soldiers, or retained as

* Moollah Mahomed Châr, in his History of the Kujur Family, states, that the number of captives was only fifteen thousand. The accounts which I have received from the best informed Georgians and Armenians, make their number amount to twenty-five thousand; and some of these appeared to have fair data for their estimate. It is probable that fifteen thousand were taken at Teflis, and the remainder from the towns and villages in Georgia.

† Numbers of those captives who had attained the age of maturity preserved their own religion, and among those were many females. I was acquainted with an affluent merchant, who told me that he had offered marriage to a beautiful Georgian, whom he had purchased from a soldier, if she would become Mahomedan, but in vain: and "she "prays so prettily," he added, smiling, "to her little images, that I have been half "tempted myself to become *idolater*."

CHAP. XXI. domestics. In the former case they frequently rose to high command and station; and, in the latter, they were always favoured and confidential servants; and their children were, from being born in the house*, considered in a light hardly less respectable than the relations of the family.

Aga Mahomed Khan marches towards Gunjah. A. D. 1795. A. H. 1209. Winters in the plain of Mogâm.

Aga Mahomed Khan, after having sacked Teflis, marched towards Gunjah; and being resolved to complete the subjugation of the provinces in that quarter, he remained, during the winter, encamped on the plain of Mogâm, near where the Cyrus, one of the finest streams of Georgia, unites with the Araxes. The Persian monarch had appointed one of the principal chiefs † of his tribe to the government of Shirwan; but on receiving complaints of his violence and extortions, he recalled him. The inhabitants of the country he had oppressed, encouraged by his disgrace, rose in a body, and put this noble to death. We are informed, that the occurrence of this event greatly affected Aga Mahomed, and it was expected that he would make a terrible example of those by whom the murder had been perpetrated: but this ruler seldom gave loose to his indignation, unless when policy dictated: and on the former Governor of Shirwan, who had before fled, coming to the royal camp to solicit mercy for himself and people, he freely forgave him; and his clemency was repaid by the complete submission of that province to his authority. The chief of Erivân ‡ also propitiated his favour, by obeying a summons to appear in his presence: but Ibrahim

* A remarkable instance of the light in which the Khanah-zad, or "house-born "slaves," are considered, has been given in the Life of Timour.—Vide note, Vol. I. page 456.

† Moostâphâ Khan Dewâlloo.

‡ His name also was Moostâphâ Khan.

Khulleel Khan, the Governor of Sheshâh, still resisted; and as the Persian troops were unable, from the want of artillery, to take his fortress, their commander was compelled to rest satisfied with directing all the country in its vicinity to be laid waste and plundered.

Aga Mahomed Khan, though he had long enjoyed sovereign power, had not yet been invested with the royal tiara. He used to observe, that he had no title to the name of king even, till he was obeyed throughout the whole of the ancient limits of the empire of Persia. After he had subdued Georgia, his courtiers pressed him to go through the ceremony of a coronation. He consented, with apparent reluctance; and, having assembled all his military chiefs, he pointed to a crown that had been prepared, and asked them, if they desired he should put it on. "Recollect," said he, "that, if I *do*, your toils "are only commencing; for I cannot consent to wear the Persian "crown without as much power as has been enjoyed by the greatest "sovereigns of that country*." The leaders of his army, the ministers of his court, and the princes of his family, all joined in their entreaties that he would place it upon his head, and promised that their lives should be devoted to the promotion of his glory. He complied with their request; but he only assumed a small circular diadem, ornamented with pearls †. He refused to wear the gorgeous crown of Nâdir Shah ‡, the rich plumes of which denoted the kingdoms that had been subdued by that conqueror: but the politic monarch consented to gird on the royal sabre, which was consecrated

Is solicited to accept the crown.
A. D. 1796.
A. H. 1210.

His speech to the assembly on his consenting to wear it.

* Persian MS.

† It was called the Kullah Kaianee. He only wore this upon state occasions.

‡ Nâdir wore four plumes in his crown, which were meant to denote his power as the paramount ruler of Affghânistan, India, Tartary, and Persia.

CHAP. XXI. at the tomb* of the holy founder of the Suffavean family; and he became, by that act, pledged to employ the sacred weapon in the defence and support of the Sheah faith; which, as has been before stated, had, from the commencement of that dynasty, become the national religion of Persia.

Collects an army, and proceeds to subdue Khorassan A. D. 1796. A. H. 1210.

Aga Mahomed Khan collected a still more numerous force than that with which he had conquered Georgia, to subdue Khorassan. He proceeded to that province by the route of Asterabad, that he might punish the Turkoman tribes in its vicinity, who had recommenced their plundering inroads. His march was directed to Mushed; and, as he advanced, he received the submission of all the petty chiefs† in his route; none of whom dared to oppose so numerous an army, led by a monarch, who was known to be relentless to all who refused him their obedience. Among those who proffered their allegiance was Isaak Khan‡, of Turbut-e-Hyderee. The enemies of this chief had endeavoured to prejudice Aga Mahomed Khan against him, by representing him as a Tajuck of low birth, whose usurpation of power was of dangerous example. The wise sovereign, however, disregarded these representations, and distinguished him by his peculiar favour and protection. Isaak Khan

Receives the submission of several petty chiefs.

* The tomb is at Ardebil, where the monarch must go to put on the sacred sword. The weapon is left one night on the tomb; and, during that time, the saint is invoked to be propitious to the sovereign who is to wear it. Next day, when it is girded on, the nobles are feasted, and large sums distributed in charity to the poor.—*Persian MS.*

† The first of these that submitted was Ameer Goonah Khan, of Chinnaran; to whom Aga Mahomed Khan sent a Koran, containing an oath, to which the royal seal was affixed, promising him safety and protection.

‡ For the history of this chief, vide Vol. II. page 226.

alone, of all the chiefs who joined him, was not required to give hostages for his fidelity; and his attachment repaid the generous confidence that was reposed in his character.

The condition of the City of Mushed, against which this expedition was chiefly directed, has been before described. The weakness and distraction of its rulers had reduced the inhabitants to a state of wretchedness, that it appeared hardly possible to aggravate: but the late inroads of the Usbegs had added to their misery; and they, in consequence, looked forward with more hope than alarm to the approach of Aga Mahomed Khan, who professed that his only design was to pay his devotions at the tomb of the holy Imaum Rezâ; to restore the city, where the remains of that sacred person were interred, to prosperity; and to punish those who had sacrilegiously dared to plunder of its wealth the mausoleum of the holy descendant of the prophet. The real motives for this invasion were,—to establish his power over Khorassan; to check the inroads of the Turkomans and Usbegs; and to possess himself of the wealth that still appertained to the miserable descendants of Nâdir, against whom it was believed by many that he cherished a spirit of revenge, on account of the murder of his grandfather, and the cruel wrongs which he himself had sustained from the immediate successor of that conqueror.

His motives for proceeding to Mushed.

Nâdir Meerza, who was, at this period, the actual ruler of Mushed, fled, on Aga Mahomed Khan's advance, into the Affghan territories, leaving his blind parent, the unfortunate Shah Rokh, to deliver over that city to a monarch, against whom resistance was deemed to be useless. When the Persian army advanced near the walls, Shah Rokh went out to meet its leader, who, after he had

Nâdir Meerza flies from Mushed.

A. D. 1796. A. H. 1210.

Aga Mahomed Khan enters Mushed.

CHAP. XXI. received his submission, walked on foot, attended by all his nobles, to the tomb of the Imaum Rezâ, where he knelt and kissed the ground, in token of his devotion to the sacred remains which it contained.

His avarice in possessing jewels.

The passion of avarice was almost as strongly implanted in the mind of Aga Mahomed Khan as the love of power: and he appeared, if possible, more desirous of possessing jewels than of amassing treasure. He had, on the death of Lootf Aly Khan, obtained some of the richest of those which had been brought from India by Nâdir Shah; and since his arrival in Khorassan he had recovered several of inferior value from the chiefs of that province, who had shared in the spoil of Nâdir's successors, and who now surrendered a species of wealth that it was dangerous to keep: for Aga Mahomed treated, as the most guilty of criminals, all who retained what he deemed the property of the sovereign.

Demands from Shah Rokh the jewels he is supposed to have concealed.

He denies having possession of them.

Suffers torture, and discovers them.

The blind Shah Rokh, who had long ceased to exercise power, was yet believed to possess many precious stones of great value, which he had concealed even from his sons. These were demanded by Aga Mahomed Khan: but he denied the possession of them, and took the most solemn oaths* to persuade that monarch to credit his assertion; but in vain. Torture in all its forms was applied: and we almost cease to pity this degraded and miserable

* Olivier, on what authority I know not, gives this prince the highest merit for his efforts to conceal riches which he deemed, according to this author, to be the only future dependence of his absent son. The mind is gratified at being able to feel unqualified indignation against an oppressor, and to indulge in sentiments of humanity for those who are oppressed: but all the authorities in my possession give an opposite account of this transaction to that of the intelligent traveller.

prince when informed, that his discoveries kept pace with the pains which were inflicted upon him. Treasures and jewels were produced, which had been sunk in wells and built up in walls: and at last, when a circle of paste was put upon his head, and boiling lead poured into it, he, in his agony, discovered a ruby of extraordinary size and lustre, which had once decorated the crown of Aurungzebe, and was the chief object of the search of Aga Mahomed. That monarch, we are informed*, the moment he heard that this jewel was found, expressed the greatest joy: he directed the torments of Shah Rokh to cease; and accused that prince, not altogether without justice, of being the author of the great miseries which he had suffered. He, however, most inhumanly directed that he should be immediately conveyed, with his whole family, to Mazenderan: and the wretched grandson of Nâdir terminated his life† a few days after he left Mushed.

A. D. 1796. A. H. 1210. Death of Shah Rokh.

Aga Mahomed Khan had despatched a mission‡ to Bokharah, with a letter addressed to Abdool Ghazee Khan, stating, "That he "had heard of the usurpation of the royal power by a son of the "Ameer Daniel; that, in consequence, many evils had arisen; "and among the greatest, true believers, who were made prisoners "in Persia, were sold like cattle at the market-place of Bokharah."

Aga Mahomed Khan's letter to the ruler of Bokharah.

* Persian MS.

† Shah Rokh died at Dâmghân. His death was the consequence of the tortures that had been inflicted upon him. He was sixty-three years of age.

‡ The MS. from which the account of Aga Mahomed Khan's transactions at Mushed is taken, is written by an intelligent and learned man, who was at Mushed when that city was taken by Aga Mahomed Khan, and who appears to possess the fullest knowledge of the events of that period.

CHAP. XXI. He called upon Abdool Ghazee Khan to restore immediately all captives that had been taken, and to beware in future how he provoked his vengeance. Beggee Jân, who received this letter, affected to treat the Persian king with equal, if not greater contempt. "I "have heard," said the old priest, "in a circular letter which he "addressed to the chiefs of Khorassan, that *my lord eunuch** is "come among you: seize him if you can: if not, inform me, and "I shall proceed to your quarter and punish him." These able rulers never encountered each other: if they had lived to do so, it is difficult to pronounce which would have triumphed.

Invites the King of Cabul to join him.

Aga Mahomed Khan had sent an ambassador to Zemaun Shah, King of Cabul, to explain to that prince the motives which had induced him to invade Khorassan, and to propose an union of their forces for the conquest of Bokharah. If we could grant our belief to the Persian historian† who records the events of this period, the Affghan monarch had agreed to the alliance; and every thing was prepared for an expedition into Tartary, when the attention of Aga Mahomed was called to the protection of his own dominions, which were invaded by a formidable army of Russians.

The Empress Catherine the Second had learnt, with sentiments of horror, the dreadful punishment which the King of Persia had

* Beggee Jân constantly called Aga Mahomed Khan "Achtâ Khan;" a title, of which "my lord eunuch" is a very delicate translation.

† Mahomed Hussein Khan Karagoozoloo was the envoy to the King of Cabul: and the historian of the Life of Aga Mahomed Khan states, that he obtained a cession of Bulkh to facilitate the intended operations of the Persian monarch against Beggee Jân. This is not probable: and if the King of the Affghans ever entered into such an engagement, he had probably no intention of fulfilling it.

inflicted upon a prince and people whose crime was having sought her protection, and who were tempted to provoke their fate by the expectation which they had entertained of her support. Various conjectures have been formed of the reasons which prevented that support being given at an earlier period. An inhabitant of Georgia, who has given an account of this invasion, states, that General Goodavitch was within six marches of Teflis in command of a Russian force of sufficient strength to have defended that capital, but that he refused to advance, though repeatedly solicited by Heraclius to come to his aid. This commander, he adds, would not believe that the danger was so imminent, but thought that the account of Aga Mahomed Khan's force was exaggerated; and, at all events, that that monarch would never attack the capital of Georgia before he had made himself master of the fortresses of Sheshâh and Erivân. But the fact* is, that the Russian commander, who was himself at Georgievsk, and whose corps was scattered on the line of the Caucasus, could not possibly have assembled his troops and have reached Teflis in less than three or four weeks: and it is probable that the cautious Heraclius, deeming the presence of a Russian force within his territories as no slight evil, delayed calling for aid till it was too late, in the expectation that some circumstances might occur to deter, if not altogether to prevent, the advance of Aga Mahomed Khan.

Reasons which prevented their assisting Heraclius.

* I make this assertion upon the most authentic information of the facts stated. The Russian traveller, Klaproth, who gives a short narrative of the events of this period, makes no mention of the causes that prevented the Russians protecting Georgia. This writer exaggerates the force of Aga Mahomed Khan in a most extraordinary degree. He says, that monarch assembled for this campaign two hundred thousand men.

CHAP. XXI.

The empress's designs in invading Persia.

The impression which this event made upon the mind of the Empress Catherine is fully proved by the measures that she adopted. These were of a nature which showed her designs went far beyond the restoring of her influence in Georgia, and the future preservation of that province: she, no doubt, contemplated the subversion of the power of Aga Mahomed Khan. But whether her ultimate design was to place his brother (who had fled to Russia and entreated her aid,) upon the throne, or to have rendered the north-western part of Persia a province of her empire, is unknown, except to those intrusted with the secrets of her council. Goodavitch, the moment that the account of the defeat and flight of Heraclius reached Petersburgh, was directed to advance into Georgia with eight thousand men. A Russian general had proceeded with a small corps to Derbund, and passed the winter under the walls of that city, where he was joined in the ensuing spring by an army of thirty-five thousand men, commanded by Valerian Zuboff. That general instantly commenced the most active operations. The forts of Derbund, Bâku Talish, Shâmâkee, and Gunjâh, either surrendered, or acknowledged the authority of the invaders. Before winter, the Russians were masters of all the coast of the Caspian, from the mouth of the Terek to that of the Kur, or Cyrus; and they established along the banks of the latter river a line of communication with Georgia. After these successes, Zuboff, with the main army, had crossed the Araxes, and fixed his winter quarters on the celebrated plain of Chowâl Mogâm*, from whence the whole of Aderbijan was open to his invasion; and the subjugation of that province was likely to be followed by an

A. D. 1796.
A. H. 1210.

Successes of the Russians.

* For a description of this plain, vide Vol. II. page 62.

attack on Teheran, the capital of the Persian king. The rear of Zuboff's army was protected by the troops in Georgia; and a corps had been sent from Astracan to cover his left. The advance of this corps already occupied the Island of Lankeroon, on the shores of Ghilan, and threatened with immediate attack the neighbouring ports of Resht and Enzelee.

A. D. 1796. A. H. 1210. Aga Mahomed Khan leaves Mushed and proceeds towards Teheran.

Aga Mahomed Khan, when he heard of the progress of the Russians, appointed a chief of his own tribe Governor of Mushed; and, having placed a force which he deemed adequate for the defence of that city under his orders, proceeded towards Teheran. It was too late in the season to commence operations that year*: but the army was commanded to assemble very early in spring; and every chief in the kingdom was summoned to collect all his adherents, "in "order to punish the insolent unbelievers of Europe, who had dared "to invade the territories of the faithful†."

A. D. 1796. 9th Nov. A. H. 1211. Death of the Empress Catherine. The Russian army is recalled.

Persia had not for many years been threatened with a more serious danger than that which now impended: but the storm vanished in a moment on the death of the Empress Catherine, which happened at the close of this year. One of the first acts of her son and successor was to recall the army under Zuboff‡, which

* He reached his capital on the twentieth of September. In the province of Aderbijan, the winter often sets in in October; and it is not unusual to have very heavy falls of snow in that month. In 1810 the whole country was covered with snow by a storm that commenced on the twentieth of October.

† Persian MS.

‡ There is reason to conclude, that the hatred which the Emperor Paul entertained for the leader of this army, who was the brother of Plato Zuboff, the favourite of the deceased empress, was one of the chief motives which made him direct this force to evacuate Persia. A separate order was sent to the commandant of every regiment in

CHAP. XXI. returned without suffering any loss in its retreat. The countries, indeed, through which it marched were friendly *: and its commander had observed so strict a discipline, that he left, in the provinces he had invaded, as strong an impression of the justice as of the power of the sovereign whose troops he commanded. The reputation of Catherine had spread to every quarter of the East. The inhabitants of Persia had heard, from the merchants who travelled over Russia, the most exaggerated accounts of the wisdom of her internal administration, and the success of her foreign wars. The admiration which her conduct excited was increased by the consideration of her sex. To a nation, among whom females are only esteemed as the slaves of pleasure, it was almost an inexplicable wonder to see a woman † ruling a great empire with more than the genius of man. Her fame gave strength to her armies: and, if she had lived, there is every ground to suppose that she might have made a serious impression upon Persia; particularly if her designs had been limited, as was professed, to the object of placing another monarch upon the throne of that kingdom: but the ultimate

this army to retreat; but not one line was addressed to the commander-in-chief. We need make no comment upon the causes which could alone have produced so unexampled and extraordinary a proceeding.

* One general officer went, unguarded and unmolested, in his carriage from Derbund to Astracan. We could not have a stronger proof of the unsettled state of the country.

† Catherine the Second was, during her life, known in Persia by the name of "Khoorsheed Kullah," or "the sun crowned:" and the inhabitants of that country still designate her by this title, which, from being used as a term to describe the sovereign of an empire, has become in Persia the personal appellation of this empress.

success of this project, to extend the influence, if not the power of Russia in this quarter of Asia, must have depended more upon the disposition of the inhabitants of Persia, than upon the numbers or the valour of the Russian army, which would, in its progress, have been exposed to difficulties that nothing but the aid of a party in the country invaded could have enabled it to overcome.

Means devised by Aga Mahomed Khan to repel the attack of the Russians.

Aga Mahomed Khan always expressed great confidence in his means of repelling this attack; and the plan he had resolved to pursue was, undoubtedly, that which was calculated, above all others, to ensure success. We are informed of his intentions by an anecdote that very fully illustrates his character. He told the assembled leaders of his army, that the Russians had presumed, during his absence in Khorassan, to invade the opposite frontier of his dominions. "But my "valiant warriors," he added, "shall be led against them; and we "will, by the blessing of God, charge their celebrated lines of "infantry, and batteries of cannon, and cut them to pieces with our "conquering sabres." The chiefs applauded the heroic resolution of their sovereign, and promised to support him with their lives. When they had gone, the monarch directed his minister, Hajee Ibrahim, to approach; and asked him, if he had heard what he had said to the military chiefs. The minister said he had. "And do you think," said he, "I will do what I have told them?"—"Undoubtedly, if it "is your majesty's pleasure," was the reply. "Hajee," said Aga Mahomed Khan, half angry, "have I been mistaken? are you also "a fool? Can a man of your wisdom believe I will ever run my "head against their walls of steel, or expose my irregular army to be "destroyed by their cannon, and disciplined troops? I know better. "Their shot shall never reach me: but they shall possess no country

CHAP. XXI.

"beyond its range. They shall not know sleep: and, let them march "where they choose, I will surround them with a desert *."

He determines to move towards Georgia A. D. 1797. A. H. 1211.

When Aga Mahomed Khan learnt that the Russians had retreated, he determined to move towards Georgia. Heraclius had died soon after the loss of his capital. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Goorgeen Khan; who, on the departure of the Russian troops, dreaded the vengeance of the Persian king so much, that he had recourse to the dangerous expedient of taking into his service a large corps † of Lesghees, a race of mountaineers, who continually made inroads into the valleys of Georgia, and whose desire of plunder was not likely to subside, from the opportunity which the fears of this weak prince gave them of indulging it.

The inhabitants of Sheshâh invite him to take possession of that place.

The Persian army left Teheran early in spring. When advanced within about sixty miles of the Araxes, Aga Mahomed Khan received intelligence from the principal inhabitants of Sheshâh, that they had endeavoured to seize their governor, Ibrahim Khan, but that he had fled to the mountains of Dâghestan: and they requested that the monarch would hasten to take possession of the fortress, which they were ready to deliver over to him. The moment this intelligence was received, Aga Mahomed Khan left all his heavy baggage, and a part of his army to guard it, and proceeded, with a light corps, to

Proceeds towards it.

* I went upon my first public mission to Persia in 1800, four years after this period, and lived, during my stay at the capital, with Hajee Ibrahim; who repeated to me, in the very words I have used, his private conversation with Aga Mahomed Khan upon this occasion.

† A Manuscript, written by an intelligent native of Teflis, states the number of Lesghees that entered Georgia at fifteen thousand: he adds, "These friends were more "to be dreaded than any enemies."

occupy the important fortress, which had so long baffled all his attempts. He found the Araxes full, but commanded his troops to cross. The boats were insufficient to carry them over: but so great was the dread of disobeying his orders, that those who could not get boats threw themselves into the river. Many were drowned, as the stream was both deep and rapid: but the object was gained. The monarch entered Sheshâh before the friends of Ibrahim Khan could make an effort for its recovery: and this fortunate commencement led all to anticipate a glorious campaign: but as the army of Aga Mahomed Khan were indulging in anticipated victories, one of those events occurred, which, in nations subject to despotic rule, are the chief cause of the sudden and great changes with which they are continually afflicted.

Enters Sheshâh. A. D. 1797. A. H. 1211.

Three days after Aga Mahomed Khan entered Sheshâh, a dispute occurred between Saaduck, a Georgian slave, who was a personal attendant of the monarch, and another servant*, respecting some money that was missing. The king was enraged at the noise they made, and directed that both should be instantly put to death †. Saaduck Khan Shekâkee, a nobleman of high rank, solicited their pardon. This the king refused; but said, as it was the night of Friday, and sacred to prayer, he would not take their lives till next morning. It almost reconciles us to the belief of those

A dispute between two of his servants involves him in danger.

* The name of this person was Khodâdâd. He was a ferâsh, or person employed in pitching and taking care of the tents.

† I find in the accounts of this transaction a slight difference with regard to the offence committed by these servants. One MS. states, that Saaduck had some days before enraged the king by spilling some water on the carpet on which he was praying.

CHAP. XXI.

reports which were spread, at this period, of the derangement of the mind of Aga Mahomed Khan*, when we are informed, that these attendants, whom he had sentenced to death, and who well knew, from his character, that the sentence was irrevocable, were yet permitted to perform, during the night they had to live, their usual avocations about his person. Despair gave them courage; and, when the monarch was asleep, they entered his tent, accompanied by a man † whom they had associated in their design, and put an end, with their poniards, to the existence of one of the most able monarchs that ever sat upon the throne of Persia. It was conjectured, that these menials were encouraged to the murder of their prince by Saaduck Khan Shekâkee: and subsequent events gave to the suspicion every appearance of truth; for this ambitious nobleman not only afforded them protection, and accepted of the crown jewels which they brought him, but, having assembled his tribe, endeavoured to seat himself upon the throne of Persia.

He is murdered. A. D. 1797. A. H. 1211.

Character and government of Aga Mahomed Khan.

Aga Mahomed Khan was murdered in the sixty-third year of his age. He had been a ruler of great part of Persia for upwards of twenty years, but had only for a short period enjoyed the undisputed sovereignty of that country. The person of this monarch was so slender, that, at a distance, he appeared like a youth of fourteen or fifteen. His beardless and shrivelled face resembled that of an aged and wrinkled woman; and the expression of his countenance, at no time pleasant, was horrible when clouded, as it very often was, with indignation. He was sensible of this, and could not bear that

* One of the ministers of Aga Mahomed assured me, that the mind of that monarch was, at this period, in a state approaching to insanity.

† His name was Abbas.

CHAP. XXI.

any one should look at him*. This prince had suffered, in the early part of his life, the most cruel adversity; and his future conduct seems to have taken its strongest bias from the keen recollection of his misery, and his wrongs. The first passion of his mind was the love of power; the second, avarice; and the third, revenge. In all these he indulged to excess; and they administered to each other: but the two latter, strong as they were, gave way to the first, whenever they came in collision. His knowledge of the character and feelings of others was wonderful: and it is to this knowledge, and his talent of concealing from all, the secret purposes of his soul, that we must refer his extraordinary success in subduing his enemies. Against these he never employed force till art had failed; and, even in war, his policy effected more than his sword. His ablest and most confidential minister, when asked if Aga Mahomed Khan was personally brave,

* In one of the Manuscripts in my possession, the following remarkable anecdote is related. Aga Mahomed Khan was subject to fits, and used to remain (when attacked by this disorder,) insensible for one or two hours. When he was one day hunting near Kerman, he had separated from his followers. His horse got into some swampy ground; and, when the animal was struggling to get free, the monarch fell into a fit. An attendant came up; and, seeing his situation, extricated him with great difficulty, and watched him till he came to his senses. Aga Mahomed, on seeing the soldier standing over him, was at first alarmed: but, on being told what had occurred, he thanked the man, and promised to reward him. He did so; but, in the man's opinion, not sufficiently; and he continued, when on duty, (which was frequent, as he was one of the personal guards,) to look the king full in the face whenever he could. Aga Mahomed was so enraged at this, that he one day ordered the man's eyes to be put out. He appeared, afterwards, struck with his own ingratitude, and directed that the poor fellow should retire to his home, and enjoy double pay for life.

CHAP. XXI. replied, "No doubt: but still I can hardly recollect an occasion "where he had an opportunity of displaying courage. That mo-"narch's head," he emphatically added, "never left work for his "hand *!"

The first great effort of Aga Mahomed Khan's life was to acquire power; and the second was, to render it permanent in his family. Before he obtained the crown, he controlled every passion that could obstruct his rise: but when the mask was no longer necessary, he threw it aside: and, as policy no longer restrained his feelings of revenge and of avarice, he proceeded to destroy and to plunder all whom he considered in any way hostile to his government. Every chief, who was likely, from birth, or character, to aspire to the throne, was either put to death, or deprived of sight: and by this politic, but barbarous proceeding, he completely suppressed that spirit of rebellion, which had so long distracted Persia. This monarch, we are told, had fully persuaded himself that the means which he took to preserve the throne were not directed to a selfish object: and he used often to exclaim, when speaking of his successor, the present Monarch of Persia, "I have shed all "this blood, that the boy, Bâbâ Khan, may reign in peace†."

The dreadful scenes which occurred at the close of the life of Nâdir Shah, had effaced all those favourable impressions which were made by the auspicious commencement of that conqueror's reign: and the state in which he left the empire was every way unhappy for his immediate successors. The opposite course of moderation and

* I have stated the very words of the answer made to me by Hajee Ibrahim, when I questioned him respecting the personal valour of Aga Mahomed.

† Persian MS.

humanity, which Kurreem Khan had pursued, was, perhaps, from the condition of Persia, one cause of the anarchy and confusion in which that kingdom was plunged at his death. The means used by Aga Mahomed to remedy the evils which he found in the state, and the measures which he adopted to promote the future tranquillity of his country, and to secure the undisputed possession of the throne to his appointed successor, were completely successful: and we are reluctantly compelled to admit, that some of those acts, which we contemplate with the greatest horror, principally contributed to this desirable result. To illustrate this effect, and to obtain a better knowledge of those causes which produced so great a change in the condition of Persia, it will be necessary to say a few words on the conduct which this sovereign observed towards every class of his subjects.

His conduct to his own family.

To his own family Aga Mahomed was, after his power was established, cruel and severe in the extreme, except to his nephews *, Futteh Aly Khan, and Hussein Kooli Khan, to whom he acted as a parent. He had always employed the former in the administration of public affairs: and this young prince, for some years before his uncle's death, held the high station of Governor of Fars. It does not appear that the delicate relations between the monarch and his successor were ever disturbed either by suspicion or alarm; and our opinion of the character of Aga Mahomed is raised, by the conduct he invariably pursued towards the person whom he had, from the first, destined to succeed to the throne.

* These were the sons of his full brother, Hussein Kooli Khan.

And to the religious men of his kingdom.

To the religious men of his kingdom, Aga Mahomed was attentive, and sometimes generous. He appeared pious; and was not only regular in observing the forms of prayer at the stated hours, but arose at midnight, whatever had been the fatigues of the day, to perform his devotions. His mind was not free from superstition: and one author, who gives some remarkable anecdotes of this monarch, informs us, that after he had slain the gallant Jaaffer Kooli Khan*, he directed the corpse to be immediately removed from Teheran, that he might not break the solemn vow which he had taken on the Koran, not to detain his brother beyond one night in that city. It is difficult to believe that the human mind can either cheat itself, or expect to impose upon others, by such sacrilegious mockery.

His administration of justice.

Aga Mahomed Khan was rigid in the administration of justice. He punished corruption in the magistrates whenever detected. Those who committed crimes which, according to the Koran, merited death, were seldom forgiven: and his inexorable mind never pardoned persons who disturbed, in any shape, the general tranquillity of his dominions. The first noble in the land, who aspired beyond his station; the soldier, who disobeyed his orders; and the thief, who plundered on the road; met the same fate.

His conduct to his ministers and the officers of his court.

His conduct to his ministers and the chief officers of his court was often harsh and abrupt, and sometimes cruel. Hajee Ibrahim was an exception. The penetration of the monarch discovered at once the talents of that extraordinary man, whose plainness of manner, blunt speech, manly fortitude, and astonishing knowledge

* Vide Vol. II. page 277.

of public affairs, from the management of the police of a village, and the revenue of a district, to the conduct of a negotiation, or the government of an empire, led Aga Mahomed to give him his entire confidence: and, during the latter years of his life, the king would hardly allow any communication, however trifling*, to be made to him through any other channel. No confidence was ever better rewarded. The minister, though he studied the character of his master, and gained upon him by the means he took to supply his avarice, and to forward his plans of ambition, laboured to promote the general prosperity of the empire; and was, from his kindness of disposition, the medium of obtaining mercy to others whenever he could venture to interfere without danger to himself.

The ministers of Aga Mahomed Khan were not exempt from the attacks which avarice and policy led him occasionally to make upon his nobles and principal officers. As a mode of levying fines, he was in the habit of selling those whom he meant to plunder: and the purchaser, in order to enable him to raise the sum required, was vested with power over every thing except the life of the person he bought. The king, we are told, desired to obtain a sum of money from Meerza Shuffee†, who had been his

His mode of selling his nobles and others to raise money

* Hajee Ibrahim told me, that one day when part of the army was engaged with the enemy, the zumbooruks, or "camel swivels," were badly managed, and that Aga Mahomed Khan demanded of him in a passion why this was the case? "I answered," said the Hajee, "that I really could not tell; it was the fault of "the commander of the corps attached to them."—"That may be," said Aga Mahomed Khan: "but I shall blame no one but my prime minister, whom I expect "to see that every department is in proper order."—"This was very unreasonable," added the Hajee smiling, "for he knew I never pretended to be a soldier."

† It is stated in one of the Manuscripts which notices this transaction, that the

CHAP. XXI. principal minister before the elevation of Hajee Ibrahim, and actually sold him to his rival for a specific amount. This transaction took place in public court; and a servant of Hajee Ibrahim advanced, and, having ungirded the band from his waist, threw it over Meerza Shuffee, and led him to the house of his master, where, however, he was treated with kindness and attention. The Hajee endeavoured to satisfy his mind that he had acted as he had done from a knowledge of the monarch's character, who, he saw, was resolved to obtain the money he demanded, and might have had recourse, had he not offered to give it, to proceedings more harsh and disagreeable to both: and he gave a proof of his sincerity by advancing a part of the sum which Meerza Shuffee, after every effort, was unable to raise. When the amount was paid, the minister was released, and returned as usual to his duties *. However generously Hajee Ibrahim behaved, we are not to conclude that he was insensible to the strength he obtained from this open and public disgrace of a rival who was one of the oldest and most favourite

minister owed a balance to the monarch; and another MS. which notices the occurrence asserts, that Aga Mahomed first offered to sell Hajee Ibrahim to Meerza Shuffee; but the latter dreaded the established influence of his rival too much to venture on the purchase.

* In all the arbitrary governments of the East, the disgrace and punishment of a minister are deemed no obstacles to his immediate resumption of the duties of his office. When I was at the Court of Doulut Row Scindiah, in 1804, one of his ministers, Annâ Sic-novees, was kept under a vertical sun, without a turban, for several hours, till he agreed to pay a sum of three lacks of rupees, (thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling,) that had been demanded of him. The day after this transaction I was surprised not only to see him restored to his office, but employed in a negotiation of importance.

servants of Aga Mahomed: and this occurrence added greatly to that animosity with which these ministers had long regarded each other. CHAP. XXI.

It had always been the policy of Aga Mahomed Khan to promote union in the tribe of the Kujurs. He had seen the Zund family destroy itself; and, warned by their example, he wisely endeavoured to secure a happier fate for the dynasty which he founded. Flatterers have imputed his conduct to his unfortunate brothers, to his anxiety for the accomplishment of this object: he knew, these state, that nothing was likely to disturb that harmony which gave strength to his tribe, except contests between the members of his own family for the throne. To the chiefs of other tribes whom he did not suspect of ambitious designs, Aga Mahomed was neither ungracious nor unjust: but he compelled them to keep part of their family at Teheran; and, by this precaution, and employing their followers in opposite quarters of the kingdom, and sometimes removing them from one province to another, he studied to deprive them of the means of either disturbing his government, or that of his successor.

His conduct to the Kujur tribes.

His treatment of other tribes.

The good sense of Aga Mahomed Khan led him to alter some of the lesser forms of his court: he would seldom allow the inhabitants of his capital to come out to meet him when he returned from an expedition; and he disdained to circulate, (as was the usage,) upon every trifling advantage that his arms obtained, exaggerated accounts of his success. In all written communications made to the officers of government, it had been customary to use the most hyperbolical style. Aga Mahomed Khan insisted that the substance of his commands should be given in plain language. The eloquent meerzas, or secretaries of his court, unwillingly adopted a change which struck at the root of all their excellence in composition: but we are told,

Alters the lesser forms of the court.

CHAP. XXI.

that when they commenced their flowery introductions, it was not unusual for the impatient monarch to desire "that they would pass "over the nonsense, and proceed to the subject of the letter at "once*." But, however he despised unnecessary forms, no sovereign was ever more sensible of the necessity of enforcing the strict observance of those which were in any way essential to the support of the royal dignity. His minister, Hajee Ibrahim, used to recount a remarkable anecdote of his feelings upon this point. Two persons of indifferent character, but who were possessed of wealth, desired to farm a district, and had made an offer far exceeding any other which had been received. The minister, knowing the avarice of his master, thought that this proposition would afford him the greatest delight, and desired the men who had made it to attend him to the king. As he advanced, Aga Mahomed Khan exclaimed, in a loud voice, "Who are you bringing with you?"—"Two persons," said the Hajee, repeating their names, "who wish to farm a district, "and have offered most advantageous terms."—"I cannot see "them," said the monarch.—"But please your majesty," replied Hajee Ibrahim, "they will give nearly double what any other person "offers, with the best security for payment."—"No matter," said Aga Mahomed, "the money must be given up: men like them "cannot be admitted to my presence†." The royal name had been so degraded in Persia, that it perhaps required all the efforts of Aga Mahomed Khan to restore, to that high condition, the attributes in

His support of the royal dignity.

* Persian MS.

† The Hajee related this anecdote to me, as a proof that even the passion of avarice, strong as it was in the breast of Aga Mahomed Khan, was always under subjection to his policy.

which absolute power must be clothed, to render it efficient to its functions. The consequence which he attached to every act or speech that could tend, in the remotest degree, to degrade the name of king, was shown on a very remarkable occasion, when he punished, by a most inhuman beating, and the confiscation of the greatest part of his property, the principal lord in waiting, for having, when he presented an envoy from Timour Shah, exclaimed, in the ceremony of introduction, "that an ambassador from the King of "the Affghans was come to the earth at the feet of the slaves of "his exalted majesty." He is said to have been in such a rage upon this occasion, that he could hardly be induced to spare the life of this officer, who was of high rank, and belonged to the tribe of Kujur. "Did you hear what the villain uttered?" exclaimed the monarch to those who interceded for him; "that an ambassador "from one he styled king was come to the earth at the feet of my "slaves! How dared he use the sacred name of majesty, to expose "it to such degradation! But he has suffered, and my character is "retrieved*!" The nobleman, who committed this error, meant excessive flattery to his own monarch. Perhaps the policy of Aga Mahomed, while he pretended only to vindicate the name of king from injury, took this mode of repairing an insult which the ignorance of his servant had cast upon a powerful sovereign.

His respect to the name of king.

Aga Mahomed Khan treated his soldiers with more liberality and indulgence than any other class of his subjects. The issue of their pay and provisions was in general regular: and though he enforced the strictest obedience to his orders, and allowed none to

His treatment of his soldiers.

* Persian MS.

CHAP. XXI. plunder except when he authorized them, that permission was frequently granted; and what they obtained amid scenes of violence and rapine, was guarded to them as legal property by the policy of their monarch. Several women and children of the first families of Kerman were brought away by the troops when that city was sacked. Soon after this event, some of the principal inhabitants were encouraged, by the promised intercession of one of the most revered priests of Persia, to go to the capital to solicit the restoration of their wives and children. The pontiff* presented their petition, and enforced its prayer with all his eloquence. He was held in the highest veneration by Aga Mahomed Khan; and a request from him was hardly ever refused: but on this occasion, though he had the boldness to repeat his entreaties, the monarch was not to be moved; and at last said to him, with some sternness, "I cannot grant your wish. "I will never consent to irritate my soldiers by desiring them to "restore what they took under my sanction. I have, however, no "objection to the inhabitants of Kerman ransoming their wives and "children; nor to those, in whose possession they are, restoring them "in any manner they choose: but I desire you to urge me no more "upon this subject, as I am resolved not to use compulsion." The great body of his army were naturally attached to a leader who treated them with such consideration. They knew that if they yielded a prompt obedience to his orders they had nothing to apprehend from others; for the meanest soldier could always complain to Aga Mahomed, who might be said to live with his troops.

* The name of this respectable pontiff was Shaikh Mahomed Lâhsâee.—*Persian MS.*

When not employed in the field against his enemies, he was constantly engaged in hunting excursions, to which he proceeded with a great number of attendants, not merely with the view of enjoying a favourite amusement, but to inure himself and followers to continual action.

His contempt of luxury.

Unless on occasions of ceremony, Aga Mahomed Khan was always dressed in the plainest manner. His contempt of luxury was shown on all occasions; and his policy made him seize every opportunity of giving his leaders and troops a pride in those hardships and privations to which their profession doomed them. After a march, or when fatigued with hunting, he was accustomed to seat himself on the ground, and to share with his principal officers in any repast that was brought. It happened one day, as he was eating some of the hard black bread and sour milk, which form the common fare of the Persian soldier, that one of his principal ministers, who was seated near him, began to eat of the same food. The monarch instantly commanded him to desist. "Eat as much as you like "of your rich pillaws and fine sweet-meats," said he; "but never "again let me see a fellow of a secretary*, like you, touch the "food of my soldiers." The minister, with an inward smile, heard himself condemned to eat none but good and delicate viands; while the military chiefs and soldiers that sat around, felt it as a distinction to live upon a coarse diet, which their sovereign shared,

* This anecdote was first told me by Hajee Ibrahim, and I find it mentioned in a Manuscript Life of Aga Mahomed Khan. The term secretary has been used to translate the Persian word meerza, which implies a man whose occupation is to write, and whose habits of life are civil.

CHAP. XXI. and from the very taste of which, he had just debarred one of the first civil officers of the realm.

His conduct to the merchants

The merchants in Persia were efficiently protected by Aga Mahomed Khan; and, during the latter years of his reign, commerce revived in every quarter. This was not more the consequence of his justice, than of the general security which his rule inspired; and the extinction, through the severity of his punishments, of those bands of robbers with which the country had been before infested. To the farmers and cultivators he gave no further protection than what they derived from the terror of his name: but that was considerable; for, from the collector of a district to the governor of a province, all dreaded to have a complaint made against them, to a monarch, by whom the slightest deviations of those who exercised power, were often visited by the most dreadful punishment.

To the farmers and cultivators

Instances of his avarice.

Aga Mahomed had probably experienced great distress from the want of money: and, in a government where credit is unknown, a full treasury is most essential to the support of regal power. From the habit of amassing riches, he became, at last, avaricious in a degree that is hardly to be believed. We are informed by one writer, that having overheard a poor man, whose ears he had ordered to be cut off for some trivial offence, offer a few pieces of silver to the executioner if he would take off only a part of them, the king called to the man, and told him, that if he would give him double the amount that he had just offered to his servant, his ears should not be touched *. The peasant threw himself upon the ground to return thanks, and was going away,

* Persian MS.

deeming the demand for money a mere pleasantry; but he was recalled, and soon convinced that his pardon depended upon his instantly satisfying the mean avarice of the monarch. From another account we learn, that Aga Mahomed Khan actually combined with an artful religious mendicant to obtain money from his courtiers. The man met him at a place appointed, when surrounded by officers of state. The king, apparently struck by his appearance and story, ordered a large amount to be given to him, and recommended the holy man to equal attention from others. The example of the sovereign was followed by the whole court; and the mendicant received a considerable sum. It was late at night before the impatience of Aga Mahomed Khan revealed the secret. "I have been cheated!" he exclaimed to his minister; "that scoundrel of a mendicant, whom "you saw this morning, not only promised to return what I gave "him, but to give me half of what he received from others!" Horsemen were sent in every direction: but the wily fellow, who had imposed upon him, evaded all pursuit, and the courtiers secretly rejoiced in the disappointment of their monarch's cupidity.

These, and many similar anecdotes, are told of Aga Mahomed Khan. It is probable that they are exaggerated: but, whether exactly true or not, their circulation, and the credit they receive, prove that the passion of avarice was indulged to a very great extent by this extraordinary man; whose rule, checkered as his character was by great and mean qualities, restored tranquillity to a distracted kingdom, and fixed his family upon a splendid throne.

A. D. 1797.
A. H. 1211.

On the occurrence of the death of Aga Mahomed Khan, his army was thrown into the greatest confusion. Sheshâh was abandoned; and the corpse of the monarch was left to be insulted by the

CHAP. XXI. lowest of his enemies. Saaduck Khan Shekâkee marched away with his tribe, and some other chiefs followed his example: but, after the first confusion was over, the prime minister, Hajee Ibrahim, proclaimed his allegiance to the declared heir; and, having reassembled a considerable body of troops, advanced towards the capital, the gates of which were shut on all by Meerza Mahomed Khan *, till the arrival from Shiraz of Futteh Aly Khan, the nephew and appointed successor of the deceased sovereign. That prince, though instantly proclaimed king, was not publicly crowned till the beginning of the next year. It is not the intention to write the history of the reigning Monarch of Persia: it will be sufficient to notice, in a cursory manner, the principal events which have taken place since he came to the throne.

Futteh Aly Khan is proclaimed king.

A. D. 1798. A. H. 1212.

Saaduck Khan made a weak effort to oppose him, but was attacked, and defeated. This example of rebellion was afterwards followed by the king's brother †, and a prince ‡ of the Zund family: but these attempts were subdued without an action, and the internal tranquillity of the empire has never since been disturbed.

Saaduck Khan opposes him, but is defeated. Is opposed by two other chiefs, who are both subdued.

* This respectable chief is of the Kujur tribe, but of the opposite branch to the reigning family. He had been, at one period, very hostile to Aga Mahomed; but was forgiven, and employed in the highest stations by that politic monarch. His conduct on this occasion, and on every other, evinced his gratitude and attachment.

† Hussein Kooli Khan.

‡ The name of this prince was Mahomed Khan; he was the son of Zuckee Khan, and had for some time been residing at Bussorah. He advanced to Isfahan with only twenty or thirty attendants, but they were enough to alarm its inhabitants into submission. Mahomed Khan only kept possession of the city one or two days; his followers dispersed, and he was obliged to fly. He was successful in reaching the Turkish territories.

WATI MAHAL.

Engraved by C.Heath.

FUTTEH ALY SHAH.

From an Original Persian Painting.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

Futteh Aly Khan's power in Khorassan.

Futteh Aly Khan has been successful, in a series of campaigns, in establishing his power over the greatest part of Khorassan; and the chiefs * in that country, whom he has not actually subdued, yield a nominal obedience, and send an occasional tribute to propitiate his favour and protection. The Affghans have, for some years past, been in too distracted a state, from their internal divisions, to support those rights which their monarchs pretend to inherit from Ahmed Shah upon this province; and its peace is not now annually disturbed by the invasions of the Usbegs, over whom Beggee Jân no longer reigns. He died soon after Aga Mahomed; and his son, Hyder Turrah, who succeeded to the sovereignty, has, as yet, performed no deeds which can lead to a belief that he either inherits the talents, or the power, of his extraordinary parent and predecessor.

Georgia is alienated from his kingdom.

The Persian monarch has not been so successful in maintaining the north-western frontier of his kingdom. Georgia, after a warfare continued with various fortune for many years, has at last become a province of Russia; and the garrisons of that nation now extend to the banks of the Araxes, and along the southern shores of the Caspian.

His court is visited by ambassadors from European nations.

The Court of Persia has, within the last fifteen years, been again visited by the ambassadors of European nations. The power which the sovereign of that country possessed to check the Affghans, who threatened to invade India, and his ability to aid in repelling the

* Isaak Khan, the ruler of Turbut-e-Hyderee, whose history has been given, may be deemed, at this moment, by far the most powerful of the chiefs of Khorassan. He has been induced, by the distinction with which he has been treated by Aga Mahomed and the present monarch, to give his aid to the establishment of the rule of the Kujur monarchs over that province.

CHAP. XXI. ambitious views of France, if ever directed to that quarter, led the Governor-General of the British possessions in the East to form an alliance with Futteh Aly Khan, immediately after he was raised A. D. 1800. A. H. 1215. to the throne. This policy had the temporary success which was desired, of diverting the Affghans from their meditated invasion of India; and an impression was made of the power of the English nation, both on the mind of the King of Persia, and his subjects, favourable to the performance of the engagements into which that monarch had entered, to oppose, if ever required by circumstances to do so, the European enemies of Great Britain *. The establishment of this alliance was attended with the farther advantage of promoting the intercourse, and increasing the commerce, between India and Persia.

The ambition of Buonaparte gave an eager attention to every plan, which offered the most distant prospect of augmenting his means of injuring the principal power that impeded his progress to

* Monsieur Langlés, in his Notice Chronologique, at the end of his excellent edition of Chardin's Travels, observes, " That though the names of Captain Malcolm and " those of his suite are still praised by the Persians, on account of the great sums they " expended on their route from Abusheher to Teheran, *their propositions, which were " ridiculous, and even injurious, were rejected with indignation by the king and his minis- " ters!"*—*Voyages de* CHARDIN, Vol. X. page 232.

I can only remark upon this last sentence, that it is exactly opposite to the truth. Every object desired by the Indian government, when it sent a mission to Persia in 1800, was obtained; and that mission received from the king, his ministers, and all others with whom it had any intercourse, uniform kindness and attention. The learned orientalist, who has made this incorrect statement, will, I am assured, satisfy himself, on further inquiry, that he has incautiously given his name to an error of some magnitude.

universal dominion: and, however visionary his plans may appear to those acquainted with the vast difficulties he had to encounter, he certainly cherished the project of invading the dominions of the British nation in India. The friendship of the King of Persia was courted, as necessary to enable him to make this attempt; and the nature of the relations between France and Russia, at this period, afforded him every advantage in the prosecution of that object. The Court of London took considerable alarm at these proceedings: and the efforts that were deemed necessary to counteract them have led to a more direct intercourse with the Government of Persia, which has, within the space of five years, been honoured with two embassies from the King of England. CHAP. XXI.

The reigning King of Persia had listened to the overture of Buonaparte, in the hope that the mediation or power of that conqueror would enable him to recover the province of Georgia: but when changes in the condition of Europe compelled the French Emperor to abandon his designs upon Asia, he reverted to his alliance A. D. 1808. A. H. 1223. with the English; who, from the relative situation of the Indian territories, were possessed of means, which he saw them prepared to use, either to aid or attack him, as he determined to oppose or support their European enemies. It is not necessary to enter into any detail of the negotiations which have taken place between the English government and that of Persia; or to say more, than that relations of general amity subsist between these two countries, and have been confirmed by treaties. The object of the British nation must invariably be the same. It can only desire the strength and prosperity of a kingdom, which interposes as a barrier between Europe and its Asiatic dominions. Fortu-

CHAP XXI. A. D. 1814. A. H. 1230.

nately Persia is at present in a happier and more tranquil state than it has been for a long period; and its reigning monarch, who has already occupied the throne seventeen years, has, by the comparative mildness and justice of his rule, already entitled himself to a high rank among the Kings of Persia.

CHAPTER XXII.

An Account of the Religion of the Inhabitants of Persia.

THE history of a nation would be incomplete without some account of the belief of its inhabitants. The sacred character of religion, under whatever shape it assumes, has always given it a supreme influence over the human mind: but its effects are most remarkable when they influence the fate of nations. The feelings which it inspires in the breasts of individuals gather strength as they spread. The attachment entertained for peculiar dogmas, is heightened by the force of example, and the desire of pre-eminence: and a creed, when adopted by a large community, becomes the strongest of all ties by which a people can be united. But this vehement passion of the soul, which ought, from its sublime nature, to be the bond of peace, has too frequently been used, by designing and ambitious men, as a torch to kindle the flames of war. Religion has been marshalled against religion: schism against schism: kingdoms have become powerful, not from the inhabitants cherishing a spirit of patriotism, or of love to each other, but from a congenial feeling of irreconcileable hatred to their neighbours, on account of some slight difference in the mode or substance of their paying their adoration to the great Creator of the universe. CHAP. XXII.

CHAP. XXII.

These observations, which unfortunately describe the general condition of human society in every part of the globe, apply, with peculiar force, to those nations which have adopted the belief of the Prophet of Arabia; who expressly commanded his followers "to "strike off the heads of unbelievers;" and told them, that, "though "God had the power to avenge himself of his own enemies, he had "chosen them to fight* his battles†." Though some of the commentators upon that volume have tried to limit the meaning of this passage to a particular war in which Mahomed was engaged when it was written, all agree in proclaiming, that, according both to the principles of this religion and the example of its first teacher, the sword is a legitimate and hallowed instrument of conversion.

In describing the religion of the present inhabitants of Persia, it is not intended to dwell upon the forms of the Mahomedan faith, nor to enter into any minute account of the tenets of the leading or subordinate sects of that country. The object is, by a general account of their religious belief, to illustrate their past history, and to enable the reader to judge of the future events that may be expected from the operation of causes connected with this powerful motive of human action.

After a short view of the Mahomedan faith, it will be necessary to describe the tenets of the Sheah sect, which, from the establish-

* Mahomed did not propagate the doctrine of the legality of force till the thirteenth year of his mission. He declares, indeed, in several of the chapters published at Mecca, that he had no right to use any other means than those of admonition for the propagation of this faith. The law laid down regarding the slaughter of infidels, in the forty-seventh chapter, is believed, by the followers of the sect of Haneefa, to relate particularly to the war of Bedr, in which he was then engaged: but this acceptance of its meaning is not general among Mahomedans.

† Sale's Koran, Vol. II. page 364.

CHAP. XXII.

ment of the Suffavean dynasty, may be termed the national religion of Persia. The doctrines, or rather principles, of the Sooffees, or philosophical devotees, which have lately spread very widely in Persia, will also merit a portion of our attention.

The precepts of the religion of Mahomed are contained in the Koran. The principal doctrine which that prophet taught, was the unity of God; and he proclaimed, that the chief object of his mission was to bring men back to the belief of that great and important tenet of faith. There never was, he contended, nor ever could be, but one orthodox religion; and though the laws and ceremonies of that were temporary, and subject to alteration, the substance of religion being eternal truth, was immutable. He taught, that whenever this religion became corrupted, God had, from his goodness, sent apostles and prophets to recall mankind to the true path. Of these there had been several: but the principal before him were Moses and Jesus*. He declared himself the seal of the prophets; and that none would come after him.

* Jesus is made, in the sixty-first chapter of the Koran, to exclaim, " O children " of Israel! verily I am the apostle of God sent unto you, confirming the law which " was delivered before me, and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come " after me, and whose name shall be Ahmed[3]." Ahmed is derived from the same root as Mahomed, and was one of the names of the prophet. This prophecy is founded upon a paraphrastical translation of the sixteenth chapter of John in the New Testament, in which the Paraclete, or Comforter, is promised. This word, it is contended by Mahomedans, should be read Periclete, or " the illustrious;" a word of the same signification as Ahmed, the name of their prophet.

[3] Sale's Koran, Vol. II. page 423.

CHAP. XXII.

The doctrine* of Mahomed is divided by his followers into two distinct parts: the first is termed faith; the second religion, or practice. The former consists in a belief of the creed; that there is no God but one, and that Mahomed is his prophet: and the profession of this implies a belief in God, his angels, his scriptures, his prophets, in the resurrection, in the day of judgment, and of God's absolute decree and predetermination of good and evil. The duties of religion or practice are prayer according to the prescribed forms, alms, fastings, and the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Nothing can be more exalted than the opinion which the followers of Mahomed are taught to entertain of the Almighty. Their religion may be termed a pure Deism: for the mind is every where directed to one God, as the only object of worship; and that adoration, which is his due, cannot, according to the fundamental principle of this faith, be shared by any other object; because all else, whether animate or inanimate, is created, and cannot, therefore, be elevated to a rank with its Creator. The Mahomedan is taught by the Koran to believe in the existence and purity of angels. They consider them to be beings created of fire, which neither eat, drink, nor propagate their species. These angels, according to their belief, are continually employed in different occupations: some are hymning the praises of their Maker; some are engaged in recording the actions of men; while others intercede with God to obtain pardon for the sins committed by the human race. The angel Gabriel, who is believed to have

The existence and purity of angels.

* The doctrine is termed Islâm. Faith is termed Imân: and Religion, in its practical sense, Deen.

brought the Koran from heaven, is termed the holy spirit; and the angel of revelations, Michael, is deemed the friend and protector of the Jews; Azrael is the angel of death; and Israfeel is appointed to sound the trumpet at the day of resurrection*.

The Mahomedan faith also teaches, that the devil was once an angel, but was banished from heaven because he refused to pay homage to Adam when God commanded him. They also believe in the existence of a number of good and evil spirits called jin, or genii, who are made of fire, but of a grosser mould than angels, as they eat and drink, propagate their species, and are subject to death, and liable, like men, to future reward and punishment†.

The doctrine of the angels, and of the jin, or genii, in the Koran, is taken from the Jews, and from the ancient Persians; and was, probably, introduced by Mahomed to flatter the belief and meet the prejudices of those whom he sought as converts.

The belief of Scripture.

With regard to the belief of Scripture, Mahomed taught, that God had, in various ages of the world, sent these sacred books ‡

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, Vol. I. page 94. † Ibid. p. 96.

‡ The number of these sacred volumes were, according to the Prophet of Arabia, one hundred and four: " of which, ten were given to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to " Edris, or Enoch, ten to Abraham; and the other four, being the Pentateuch, the " Psalms, the Gospel, and the Koran, were successively delivered to Moses, David, " Jesus, and Mahomed; which last being the seal of the prophets, those revelations " are now closed, and no more are to be expected. All these divine books, except the " four last, they agree to be now entirely lost, and their contents unknown, though the " Sabians have several books which they attribute to some of the antediluvian prophets: " and of those four, the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospel, they say, have undergone so " many alterations and corruptions, that, though there may possibly be some part of " the true word of God therein, yet no credit is to be given to the present copies in

CHAP. XXII. through the medium of his prophets. The Mahomedans believe that an immense number* of prophets have, from time to time, been sent from God to instruct mankind; but of this army of heavenly missionaries, only three hundred and thirteen were appointed apostles to reclaim men from the errors and infidelity into which they had fallen; and six alone of the latter number brought laws and revelations, which were ordained to abrogate what had been before established. These were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mahomed.

Belief in the resurrection.

The Mahomedans believe in the resurrection and the day of judgment: they affirm, that when the corpse is laid in the grave, an heavenly spirit gives it notice of the approach of the two examining angels, who, the moment they come, demand of the deceased, whether he believed in the unity of God and the mission of Mahomed? If he answers properly, the body is suffered to rest in peace, and is refreshed by the air of paradise; but if not, his torture†

" the hands of the Jews and Christians."—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 97.

The learned author, from whom the above is quoted, says, (page 98,) that " the " Mahomedans have a Gospel in Arabic attributed to St. Barnabas, wherein the history " of Jesus Christ is related in a manner very different from what we find in the true " Gospel, and correspondent to those traditions which Mahomed has followed in his " Koran." I made every inquiry when in Persia for this Gospel, but never could find it. I do not believe the inhabitants of that country possess either it or the Pentateuch in a complete state.

* Their numbers, according to one tradition, are two hundred and twenty-four thousand: another author states them at only one hundred and twenty-four thousand.

† " When a corpse is laid in the grave, they say he is received by an angel, who

commences, and continues till he receives his final doom at the day of judgment. CHAP. XXII.

The soul, according to the Mahomedans, is separated from the body it tenanted by the angel of death: but the souls of prophets only are at once admitted into paradise; those of all others remain in an intermediate state of bliss or misery, according to their merits*.

Its period only known to God.

The period of resurrection is known to God only. Mahomed has informed his followers, that even the angel Gabriel confessed, when he interrogated him, his ignorance upon that point. It will, the Mahomedans believe, be preceded by many terrible signs †; but even these will leave the hour of its occurrence uncertain. "On "the day of resurrection," (to use the words of Mahomed,) "the

"gives him notice of the coming of the two examiners; which are two black livid "angels, of a terrible appearance, named Monker and Nakir. These order the dead "person to sit upright, and examine him concerning his faith, as to the unity of God, "and the mission of Mahomed: if he answer rightly, they suffer the body to rest in "peace, and it is refreshed by the air of paradise; but if not, they beat him on the "temples with iron maces till he roars out for anguish so loud, that he is heard by all "from East to West, except men and genii. They then press the earth on the corpse, "which is gnawed and stung till the resurrection by ninety-nine dragons, with seven "heads each; or, as others say, their sins will become venomous beasts, the grievous "ones stinging like dragons, the smaller like scorpions, and the others like serpents; "circumstances which some understand in a figurative sense."—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 100.

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, Vol. I. page 104.

† These signs are described at length by Pocock, and in Sale's Peliminary Discourse. They include the rising of the sun in the West; the appearance of a smoke which shall fill the earth; the irruption of Gog and Magog; the speaking of beasts and birds, &c.

CHAP. XXII.

"whole earth shall be but a handful to the Almighty; and the "heavens shall be rolled together in his right hand. The trumpet "shall be sounded; and whoever are in heaven, and whoever are "on earth, shall expire. It shall sound again, and all shall arise and "look up." Then, according to the text* of the Koran, God will proceed to judgment; and every soul will be rewarded according to that which it has wrought. Unbelievers will be sent to hell, to dwell there for ever; and the faithful† will be admitted into paradise.

The pains of hell described.

The pains of hell are described at great length in the Koran and the traditions. Mahomed appears to have desired to terrify his followers by pictures of the most horrid suffering. There are degrees of torture ordained for every description of guilt; but the slightest punishment awarded to a sinner, is to have his feet shod with shoes of fire, "the fervor of which will cause his skull to boil like a cauldron‡:" but infidels alone are to suffer these pains for ever. Those

* In the text of the Koran, two sounds of the trumpet are alone mentioned: but the orthodox Mahomedans, on the ground of traditions, believe there will be three. The first is called the blast of consternation, from the horror it will strike into all that exist. The second they call the blast of examination, at the sound of which all that live will die, even the angel of death himself. The third and last sound is termed the blast of resurrection, at which all will revive. The last will be sounded forty years after the second by the angel Israfeel, who, with Gabriel and Michael, shall be restored to life, and stand upon the rock of the Temple of Jerusalem. For a full account of the mode in which the resurrection of the body is effected, see Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 110.

† God, it is said, will come in clouds, attended by his angels, to judge mankind, for whom Mahomed will become intercessor after that office has been refused by Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus, who shall beg deliverance only for their own souls.—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 115.

‡ Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 122.

CHAP. XXII.

who have professed the religion of Mahomed are, after a period of expiation, to be released from hell, and admitted into paradise. A narrow bridge, termed Ul-Aruf*, divides the mansion of pain and suffering from that of joy and eternal bliss. The bridge itself forms a part on which those will remain whose good and bad deeds are equally balanced. There is another bridge called Ul-Serat, which passes over the centre of hell, and which is described as finer than a hair, and sharper than a sword: over it all mankind must pass: the virtuous and good will proceed with ease and with the swiftness of lightning; but the wicked, in their attempt to follow them, will fall into the bottomless pit.

Description of paradise.

The Mahomedan prophet, taking his opinion of the form of the heavens from the astronomical system of Ptolemy †, places his paradise in the seventh heaven. At its entrance is a delicious fountain ‡, one cup of the waters of which, the followers of Mahomed were taught to believe would allay their thirst for ever. The soil of paradise is said to be musk and saffron; its stones, pearls and jacinths; the walls of its palaces are enriched with gold and silver; and the trunks of all its trees are of gold. Among these the chief is that called Tuba, or "the tree of happiness," which stands in the

* Ul-Aruf may be translated "the partition," as it is derived from the Arabic verb a rafa, "to part."

† The works of this celebrated astronomer, who is conjectured to have been born about the year seventy of the Christian era, were translated into Arabic; and this work, which is called the Almagestum, has continued, for seventeen centuries, to be deemed the true system of the heavenly bodies by the greatest part of the Asiatic world.

‡ This fountain is called "the pond of Mahomed," and is a month's journey in compass.—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 126.

CHAP. XXII. palace of Mahomed; and a branch of which, bearing delicious fruit*, reaches to the dwelling of every believer. From the root of this extraordinary tree, the shade of which is said to extend further than the swiftest horse could gallop in a hundred years, flow rivers † of milk, of wine, and of honey; and, in addition to these rivers, the bowers of paradise are refreshed ‡ by numberless streams and fountains, whose pebbles are rubies and emeralds; their beds, camphire and musk; and their banks, saffron. But all these glories are eclipsed by the beautiful houries, the enjoyment of whose charms constitute the great reward promised to the faithful. Their prophet assured them, that they should repose on couches covered with silk, interwoven with gold, and be surrounded with fruit gardens, refreshed with pure streams, and inhabited by beauteous black-eyed damsels, whose complexions are like rubies and pearls, and whose eyes shall never wander to any other but their husbands ||.

* This tree is laden with pomegranates, grapes, dates, and other fruits, of surprising bigness, and of tastes unknown to mortals. If a man desire to eat of any particular fruit, it will immediately be presented to him. If he prefer flesh, roasted birds will appear on its branches, and its boughs will spontaneously bend to meet his extended hand. This tree will also furnish the faithful with fine horses, richly accoutred, to ride upon, which will burst forth from its fruit.—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, Vol. I. page 127.

† The most celebrated of these was Kooser, or "the stream of life;" from the waters of which the fountain of Mahomed, at the entrance of paradise, was filled.

‡ "Therein are rivers of incorruptible water; and rivers of milk, the taste whereof "changeth not; and rivers of wine, pleasant unto those who drink; and rivers of clari- "fied honey: and therein shall they have plenty of all kinds of fruits; and pardon from "the Lord."—*Koran*, Vol. II. chap. xlvii. page 365.

|| Koran, chap. lv. Sale's Translation, Vol. II. page 399.

CHAP. XXII.

Enjoyments held out to the blessed in the paradise of Mahomed.

"They who approach near to God," the prophet adds, "shall dwell "in gardens of delight; reposing on couches adorned with gold and "precious stones; sitting opposite to one another thereon. Youths, "who shall continue in their bloom for ever, shall go round about "to attend them, with goblets, and beakers, and a cup of flowing "wine: their heads shall not ache by drinking the same, neither "shall their reason be disturbed: and with fruits of the sorts which "they shall choose, and the flesh of birds of the kind which they "shall desire. And there shall accompany them fair damsels, "having large black eyes, resembling pearls hidden in their shells, "as a reward for that which they shall have wrought. They shall "not hear therein any vain discourse, or any charge of sin; but "only the salutation, peace! peace*!"

According to the Koran, the meanest among the faithful will have seventy-two of the houries of paradise, besides the wives † which he had in this world. He will inhabit a tent, formed of precious stones, and live on the most delicious viands. His garments and furniture will be proportioned to the magnificence and splendour of his condition; and, to enable him to enjoy all these blessings, he will possess an eternal youth: all his desires will be granted the moment they are formed: and, that no sense may be ungratified, his ears will be delighted by the voice of angels, and the songs of the daughters of paradise. Even the trees that surround him will celebrate the

* Koran, chap. lvi. Sale's Translation, Vol. II. page 401.

† It is a vulgar mistake to suppose that Mahomed denied females to have souls, or excluded them from paradise: he has, however, given them no higher rank in the regions of bliss than they enjoyed in this world. They are still only esteemed as they contribute to the pleasure and enjoyment of men.

CHAP. XXII. divine praises, with a harmony far exceeding "what man hath ever "heard."

This is only a picture of the delights which await the lowest of those who rank among the blessed: for the reward of purer faith, and higher virtue, the Prophet of Arabia, copying the very expression of Scripture, has promised enjoyments, "which the eye hath "not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of "man to conceive*."

The paradise of Mahomed was not an invention of his own imagination: he borrowed much of it from the Jews, the Persians†, and the Hindoos; and some from the Christians. The Jews had planted the mansion of the blessed in the seventh heaven, and had furnished it with beautiful gardens. The magi had peopled the region of beatitude with the Hoorâni Behesht, or the houries of paradise, who are the black-eyed virgins of the Koran. The wonders of the Hindoo abode of bliss appear almost literally copied. Its celestial gunga, or sacred stream; its âpsâras, or heavenly nymphs; its tarucalpa, or tree of desire, dispensing delicious fruits, exquisite viands, and rich vestments; all find their place in the paradise of the Arabian prophet. The mansion that is prepared for the good is metaphorically described in the Christian volumes, as a glorious and magnificent city, built of gold and precious stones, with twelve gates; through the streets of which run the water of life, that flows past the tree of life, which bears various fruits, and has leaves of a healing

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 132.

† The Hoorâni Behesht, or "black-eyed nymphs" of paradise, are mentioned in the Saddir: and Hyde, in his Treatise on the Ancient Religion of Persia, page 265, states, that the charge of these heavenly ladies was committed to the angel Zamiyad.

virtue*. Jesus also had said, that the blessed should eat and drink at his table †: but when Mahomed borrowed from this description of future felicity, he rejected the doctrine which taught, that the inhabitants of this world, in the resurrection, " neither marry, nor are " given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven ‡." A sensual paradise, in which man is to derive his chief felicity from continuing to indulge the passions of his present nature, is a fundamental principle of the religion of Mahomed. Numerous passages in the Koran place this beyond doubt: and though some of his followers have revolted at so gross a doctrine, the orthodox continue to believe, in its literal sense, all that their prophet has said regarding the future state of reward and punishment.

Assembly of the brute creation at the resurrection.

The Mahomedans believe that the whole of the brute creation will be assembled at the resurrection, and that after the weak have been allowed to take vengeance on the strong, for the injuries they have received from them, they will be reduced to dust. The genii will be judged, like men, according to their actions. The bad will be condemned to the infernal regions, and the good will have a delightful dwelling assigned to them on the verge of paradise ||.

Doctrine of predestination

The doctrine of predestination is inculcated in the Koran; in which God is declared to have said, " The fate of every man have we " bound about his neck §." The meaning of this verse has given rise to numerous disputes. It has been contended, that to receive it in its literal sense, would be at variance with the justice of the

* Revelations, chap. xxi. xxii. † Luke, chap. xxii. verse 30.

‡ St. Matthew, chap. xxii. verse 30.

|| Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 114.

§ Sale's Translation of the Koran, chap. xvii.

CHAP. XXII. Creator; and the most orthodox have concurred in deciding, that it only applies to man considered in his spiritual state *. Notwithstanding these opinions, the belief of this doctrine is very general over all Mahomedan nations, and its effects are very visible. This blind fatality renders men alike insensible to the beauty of virtue, or the deformity of vice. They meet the vicissitudes of fortune with patience and resignation, because they deem them preordained and unavoidable. They are courageous in battle, from the same motive: and this doctrine was probably first taught by the warlike prophet, with a view of producing that effect upon the minds of his followers.

Stated periods and forms for the observance of prayers.

Among the points of form or observance in the religion of Mahomed, the first is prayer, which he denominated "the pillar of "faith." The importance of this duty is often inculcated in the Koran †. "Glorify God when the evening overtaketh you, and "when ye rise in the morning: and unto him be praise in heaven "and earth; and at sunset, and when ye rest at noon ‡." This mandate appears, in its literal acceptation, only to command four

* D'Ohsson's Ottoman Empire, Vol. VII. page 121.

† Sale's Translation of the Koran, chap. xxx.

‡ The appointed times of prayer are:—1st, in the morning before sunrise; 2d, when noon is past; 3d, in the afternoon, before sunset; 4th, in the evening, after sunset, but while day remains; 5th, when day is closed, but before the first watch of night.

Sale, (Vol. II. page 245,) in a note upon the translation of this part of the text, makes the following remark: "Some are of opinion, that the five times of prayer are "intended in this passage. The evening, including the time both of the prayer of "sunset and of the evening prayer properly so called; and the word I have rendered "at sunset, marking the hour of afternoon prayer, since it may be applied also to the "time a little before sunset."

periods of daily prayer: but a slight difference in the signification of the words used in the verse, has led the expounders of the sacred law to decide that five were meant: and every true believer is summoned, by the public criers, to pay his devotions that number of times each day, with his face turned towards the Temple of Mecca. Ablutions, which are enjoined on almost all occasions, are peculiarly necessary at the moment of prayer, when the purity of body is deemed essential, as an emblem of that purity of mind with which man ought to address his Creator. It is also commanded, that rich clothes and ornaments should be laid aside: these trappings of earthly vanity and power being deemed calculated to inspire pride and arrogance, which are inconsistent with that sense of humility with which a supplicant should address the Almighty. Women are not allowed to join in the public prayers at the mosques. They are directed to offer up their devotions at home: or, if they attend the place of public worship, it must be at a period when the male sex are not there. This practice is founded upon the authority of the traditionary sayings of the prophet, and is calculated to confirm that inferiority and seclusion to which the female sex are doomed by the laws of Mahomed *.

Women not admitted at public prayers

In the establishment of the usage and form of prayer, Mahomed copied the Jews, even to the position of the body at the moment of adoration: but though he regarded Jerusalem as a sacred city, he taught his followers to believe, that a superior sanctity belonged to

* The learned Sale observes, on the authority of a Mahomedan doctor of eminence, that the moslems were of opinion, that the presence of females inspired a different kind of devotion from that which was required in a place dedicated to the worship of God.

CHAP. XXII. the Temple of Mecca; towards which he directed them to turn when they offered up their supplications to God. In showing this reverence to Mecca, Mahomed accommodated his doctrine to local prejudices, and to the superstition of the Arabians, who had long paid their devotions at the temple in that city, which became more hallowed in the eyes of the Mahomedan world, from being the birth-place of their prophet.

Usage of charity described.

Charity is a duty imposed by his religion on every Mahomedan. There are two descriptions of alms: the one, obligatory; the other, voluntary. That which can be legally demanded amounts to two and a half per cent * upon the principal of the estate of the individual: but it can only be claimed from those who have a certain amount, and have been in possession of the property subject to it upwards of eleven months. This legal alms, which is termed zukat, was rigorously exacted by the prophet; who employed it in the relief of the poor, and in the maintenance † of those who served him in his wars. When the religion of Mahomed spread, this tax was found not only to be difficult to collect, but of an unequal and invidious nature. It has, in consequence, been generally abandoned. Men are left to their consciences: but the obligation of charity is so strongly

* The zukat, or legal alms, is one in forty, or two and a half per cent. It is commanded to be paid on cattle, sheep, money, corn, fruits, and on all wares that are sold. There are many different opinions among Mahomedan doctors, relative to the proportion and mode in which this tax should be collected on property of various kinds.

† The khums, or a fifth part of the spoil of infidels, which was always set aside for the use of Mahomed, formed with the zukat the whole of his revenue, and that of his immediate successors.

enforced, that few strict Mahomedans evade the performance of this sacred duty; which is recommended not only in the Koran, and traditions, but by all the writers on their law, as one of the most certain means of obtaining respect on earth, and eternal happiness in heaven. "Prayer," says one of the caliphs *, "carries us half way to God; "fasting brings us to the door of his palace; and alms procures us "admission †."

Fasting enjoined as a sacred duty.

The Mahomedans are enjoined fasting as a sacred duty. They are taught to believe, that in the month of Ramazan God sent the Koran from heaven; and, during that month, every true believer must refrain, from day-break till sunset, from eating, drinking, and all sensual gratifications. None are exempt from this obligation but travellers, sick persons, women with child, or those who are giving suck; and even these are required to make amends for their involuntary neglect of this ordination, by fasting at some other period, or by giving extraordinary alms to the poor.

Pilgrimage to Mecca.

The pilgrimage to Mecca is enjoined as a duty to all who can perform it ‡. The sacred temple at which they pay their devotions stands near the centre of that city. The Caaba, a square stone building, is the part of this edifice which is most revered. It was pro-

* Omar Ebn Abdool Azeez.

† Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 146.

‡ Sale's Translation of the Koran, chap. iii. Every person, it is assumed, should perform the pilgrimage to Mecca who has a beast to ride upon, and who can supply himself with provisions for the journey. Ul-Shaffei says, those who have money, if they cannot go, should perform this journey by deputy: Malik thinks all who have strength sufficient should go to Mecca: but Ul-Haneefa deems both money and health of body requisite before this duty can be deemed obligatory.

CHAP. XXII. bably built by the idolatrous Arabians as a house for their idols: but the Mahomedans are instructed to think that God, in compliance with the prayer of Adam, let fall from heaven a model of the holy building, the resemblance of which our first father had seen in paradise. Adam, according to this account, turned towards the representation of the celestial temple when he prayed: and, after his death, his son, Seth, built a house of the same form, of stone and clay. This was destroyed by the deluge; rebuilt by Abraham, and his son, Ismail, who erected it on the same spot, and took care that it should be of a similar shape as the former mansion, which he was enabled to do from having all its dimensions explained to him by a divine revelation*.

The celebrated black stone † which stands within the Caaba is an object of the greatest veneration: every pilgrim kisses it, and hears the tale of its extraordinary history and wonderful properties. Another stone, deemed hardly less sacred, is shown at a spot called the Palace of Abraham, where the devout visitor of the temple is told to observe the prints of that patriarch's footsteps, made when he came to see his son: and his attention is particularly directed to the holy well of Zemzem, which, he is informed, burst forth at the

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 155.

† This celebrated stone is set in silver, and fixed in the south-east corner of the temple. It is deemed by Mahomedans one of the precious stones of paradise that fell to the earth with Adam; and, being preserved at the deluge, the angel Gabriel brought it to Abraham when he was building the Caaba. It was, they say, at first white, but its surface has become black from coming in contact with those who are impure and sinful. These, and many other fables, are told of this relic of idolatrous worship, for such it undoubtedly may be considered.

command of God to relieve the drooping Hagar, when she brought the infant Ismail to the barren plains of Arabia*.

The Temple of Mecca has, since the death of Mahomed, been enlarged and ornamented by the piety and munificence of Mahomedan sovereigns, and is annually crowded with persons †, who come from every region to which his faith has extended, to perform their pilgrimage. It would occupy too much space to give a minute description of all the forms that attend this important ceremony: they are of a nature which the enemies of this religion have justly described as closely allied to the usages of idolatry and superstition. It is probable that Mahomed compromised with his first converts: and when he discovered that he could not withdraw them from their habitual veneration to the place of devotion of their fathers, he conciliated their consent to his faith by the adoption of this sacred object of their affection and reverence; and was satisfied, if he could transfer their adoration from their idols to the true God, to allow them to retain a small portion of the mummery of their former worship.

Wine and games of chance forbidden.

Both wine and games of chance are forbidden by the Koran, on the ground that their sinfulness is greater than their use ‡. Mahomed also forbad his followers to eat of the blood of animals, of swine's flesh, or of any creature that died of itself. Among the ancient Arabians four months of the year were deemed so sacred, that all wars ceased. Mahomed commanded his followers to preserve this usage, if their enemies did the same; but, under all circumstances, he

Also the blood of animals and swine's flesh.

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, Vol. I. page 157.

† For a full account of the mode in which this pilgrimage is performed, see the Preliminary Discourse on Sale's Translation of the Koran.

‡ Koran, chap. ii.

CHAP. XXII. authorized instant retaliation of attack. It cannot be surprising that an ordination so difficult to observe, and so easy to evade, should have met with little attention. Obedience may often have been given to this institution as a matter of policy, but probably never from a motive of piety.

Friday appointed for prayers.

Friday * is the day appointed by Mahomed as that on which his followers are to assemble at the mosques to attend prayer †: but it is not, like the sabbath of the Jews and Christians, considered as a day of rest. On it the people assemble in the mosques, the Koran is read and expounded by the priests; and the day, from this ceremony, is deemed to have a sacred character: but it passes unmarked by any other observance than that of attending public worship ‡.

* Various causes are assigned for Friday being fixed by Mahomed as a day of public prayer. Some say it was the day of his arrival at Medinah. Others state, that the day received its name from one of Mahomed's ancestors, because on it the people assembled before him. It is also affirmed that it was declared sacred, because, according to the belief of the Mahomedans, God finished the creation on that day.—SALE's *Koran*, Vol. II. page 425, note.

† Sale's Translation of the Koran, Vol. II. page 425.

‡ Though Friday is the day that is set apart for public worship, it is not the only one in which that is performed. The mosques of the Mahomedans are always open; and the duty of the Paish-Nâmâz, or officiating priest, requires him to attend three times every day at that to which he belongs—before the sun rises; in the afternoon; and after sunset. Those who are very exact in the performance of their religious duties accompany him. The priest says his prayers in the mosques, as in private, in an inaudible tone: the people, who stand behind him, also pray in silence. Once every day the Paish-Nâmâz should preach from the pulpit for half an hour, or more; but on Friday this duty is obligatory. He takes for his text a verse from the Koran, or from one of the books of traditions, and expounds its meaning to the people. If the mosque

CHAP. XXII.

Two feasts ordained.

The fast of Ramazan, and the cause which led to its institution, have been stated. The Mahomedans have two festivals, which European writers term the greater and lesser Bairam. The first of these commences the day after the fast of Ramazan, and is, for that reason, called the Eed-ul-Fitr, or "the festival after abstinence." The second, which begins on the tenth of Zilhâdge, is termed the Eed-ul-Koorbân *, or "the feast of sacrifice," and is instituted in commemoration of Abraham offering up his son Isaac. The rite of circumcision is not once mentioned in the Koran. It is considered as an act of imitative practice †, founded on the example of the disciples, but not on that of the prophet himself ‡. It may, according to Mahomedans, be omitted in cases where, from the age of the convert, or any other cause, there might be danger from the operation: but this important ritual is seldom neglected. It is deemed the outward mark of a true believer: and the very fear that his corpse might, in a day of slaughter, be confounded with those of infidels, and, in consequence, be denied the holy rites of sepulture, is sufficient to make every man, who professes the faith, anxious that this ceremony should be performed.

Practice of circumcision.

The Koran, which consists of one hundred and fourteen chapters, was not produced as a complete volume: and unbelievers may be

The Koran compiled in detached portions.

be small, there is only one Paish-Nâmâz, or priest; when large, it is not uncommon to have two or three, and they all perform the religious service at the same time.

* The Eed-ul-Koorbân, or "the feast of sacrifice," which commences on the tenth of Zilhâdge, the day appointed for slaying the victims by the pilgrims at Mecca.

† This practice was taken from the Jews: and Mahomedans are taught to believe that it was first instituted by Abraham.

‡ Mahomed is said to have been born circumcised.

CHAP. XXII. permitted to admire the policy which led to the gradual appearance of this professed book of Revelation. Mahomed early taught his disciples to believe that it was sent in a complete state from God to the lowest heaven by the hands of the angel Gabriel *, from whence it was communicated to him, in detached portions †, by the same angel. From the first revelation to the last occupied a period of twenty-three years: and the Prophet of Arabia declared, that he held, during the whole of this time, a continual intercourse with Gabriel, and was wont to dictate to a writer the different chapters as that angel brought them to him. No mode could have been better calculated to preserve and to promote his power. He was at once the civil ruler and the military leader of his followers; and he drew at pleasure, from a source which they deemed divine, those laws and mandates which were to regulate their lives, and to excite them to actions of virtue and of valour. In order to guard against the errors of precipitation, he inculcated, as a doctrine, that the commands he received from the Almighty were sometimes revoked: and he also warned true believers against literally interpreting all the passages in the Koran. Some parts of that volume were, he told them, to be understood as they were written; while others

* This took place on a night which is termed the night of Ul-Kadr, or "the "night of power, or glory." It is believed to be that between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth of Ramazan: but Mahomedan doctors are not further agreed respecting this date, than that it actually was during the month of Ramazan, the whole of which is deemed sacred, on account of the occurrence of this auspicious event.

† The Koran was not even sent in chapters, but in small portions, several of which are often included in one chapter.

were to be taken in a figurative sense*. By these precautions he was prepared to evade, if he could not directly repel, every charge of inconsistency, or of false prophecy.

Mahomed was possessed of a graceful person, of ready eloquence, of courage, and of wisdom. In the state in which he found his country, the means taken by this extraordinary man to propagate his doctrine, and establish his power, could hardly fail of success: and even his enemies must admit, that he entitled himself to the gratitude of his countrymen. The great majority of the Arabians, when he first proclaimed his mission, were ignorant idolaters, whose superstition was disgraced by the grossest and most inhuman usages†. They were, as a nation, divided at home and despised abroad. By adopting his religion, they learnt to pay their exclusive adoration to one true and only God; and they obtained a strength from that political union, which was the consequence of their common creed, that enabled them to become masters of the fairest portion of the globe.

The composition of the Koran considered

The Koran is written in the purest dialect of the Arabic, and is deemed, by Mahomedans, of such surpassing beauty and eloquence of composition, that they consider it impossible an uninspired human

* The following passage in the Koran exemplifies its character in this respect:

"There is no God but he, the mighty, the wise. It is he who hath sent down "unto thee the book, wherein are some verses clear to be understood; they are the "foundation of the book; and others are parabolical. But they whose hearts are "perverse will follow that which is parabolical therein, out of low schism, and a "desire of the interpretation thereof; yet none knoweth the interpretation thereof "except God."—SALE's *Koran*, Vol. I. chap. iii. page 53.

† The horrid practice of female infanticide was common over all Arabia, and is frequently reprobated in the Koran.

CHAP. XXII. being could have composed it. It cannot be expected that others should view, either the language in which it is written, or its contents, with equal enthusiasm. It has been summarily described by an able European author* as containing a few ordinances relative to polygamy, divorces, slavery, and the laws of succession; some emphatical declamations on the attributes of God; and a collection of puerile tales and extravagant fables. But we can hardly (in the pride of better knowledge,) venture to pronounce that to be puerile or contemptible which has so fully answered the purpose for which it was designed, and which is still considered as the standard of truth and perfection by nearly half the universe. The Koran of Mahomed, with many of the defects ascribed to it, abounds with the finest passages in praise of the Almighty. Its author dwells upon the great and holy theme with an eloquence that is exalted by the most enraptured fervor. The other parts, though less eloquent, were suited to the character, prejudices, and habits of those to whom his religion was offered, and whose ignorant and degraded condition it was meant to improve. His success was astonishing: and even those who have shuddered at the magnitude of his presumptuous profanation, have accorded an admiration to the man which they refused to the prophet, and have not been able to consign to that contempt, which belongs to schemes of superstitious and idolatrous worship, a religion, which, with all its errors, is grounded upon one of the most rational and sublime principles of human belief.

The purpose of the Koran, and the manner in which it was written, has rendered it a volume of law, as well as of religion. The

* Volney.

intention of its author was not only to instruct his followers in their duty to God, but towards each other: and the precepts it contains have been acknowledged, throughout the nations who profess the Mahomedan faith, as the sole foundation of all their jurisprudence. The different passages and chapters of the Koran were never put into any order by the prophet, and were, at his death, a confused heap of loose sheets. The important labour of forming them into a volume devolved upon the first caliph, Aboubeker, who arranged them, without any attention to the times at which the different revelations were made: but this was of no consequence, as each chapter is distinct, and has no necessary connexion with the one that precedes or follows it. The transcript made from the original sheets was committed to the custody of one of the widows of Mahomed; but, some years afterwards, the caliph, Osman, discovering that many spurious editions of the sacred volume were dispersed over the empire, directed that a number of copies should be taken from the one which Aboubeker had made, and that they should be distributed to the faithful; who were commanded to burn and destroy all the other editions, as erroneous *.

The spirit of division, which appeared among the followers of the Prophet of Arabia, even before his death, broke out with great violence on the occurrence of that event; and the rapid strides which his successors made to imperial power, only afforded this spirit a wider sphere of action. It would fill a volume even to name the various sects which have sprung up in the Mahomedan world. It is only meant to describe that of the Sheahs, which has become the

* Sale's Preliminary Discourse on the Koran, page 86.

CHAP. XXII. national religion of Persia, and to notice the doctrines of the Sooffees, which have spread over that kingdom: but, before we enter upon this part of the subject, it will be necessary to say a few words on the progress of the Soonee faith; which, from the great majority in the numbers of those who have concurred in its belief, claims the distinction of being entitled the orthodox, or established religion.

An account of the Soonee faith.

The Koran, considered as a book of law, was only suited to the government of a rude society, shaped like that of the Arabian tribes for whom it was first framed. When the power of the caliphs was extended, it became impossible to govern their numerous subjects by the comparatively few rules and maxims which this volume contained; and the difficulty was increased, by a great proportion of these rules of conduct being local, and altogether inapplicable to the condition of many of the nations who had embraced the Mahomedan religion. The fundamental principle, however, of this faith required, that, wherever it was introduced, all former usages and laws should be abolished; for it was deemed profanation to desire knowledge on such a subject from any other than a divine source. There appeared, therefore, no remedy, but rendering that more copious. An account of the actions, and the traditionary sayings of the prophet, who was believed never to have acted or spoken but by the inspiration of God, and whose every act and word was, in consequence, considered as a law, were collected from the mouths of his wives and companions. This immense collection was termed Sonna, and regarded by the Soonees *, or those who believed in it,

* The Jews had also a code of traditions: and it was a saying with the Pharisee, (who may be termed the Jewish Soonee,) that the words of the *Scribes* were lovely,

as of equal authority with the Koran. But the materials for the government of great empires were yet incomplete. Some part of the Koran was obscure and figurative: many of the traditions were vague, and still more contradictory of each other. To remedy the confusion and evils arising from these causes, the most learned and able of the Mahomedan divines devoted themselves to the explanation of these holy records: but it was evidently impossible that they could limit themselves to the mere exposition of texts. They sought to acquire fame by the propagation of their own opinions, and by the addition of their dogmas to those of their prophet and his immediate successors. Schisms were multiplied in every quarter where the Mahomedan religion was professed: but the great mass of believers settled at last in recognising the authority of four eminent doctors of law, Haneefa, Malik, Shaffei, and Hanbal; who were considered as holy and learned men in their lives, and, since their deaths, have been canonized as the four Imaums*, or high priests, of the established

above the words of the law, and more weighty than the law and the prophets. The Apostle Matthew, in alluding to this doctrine, says, " Thus have ye made the " commandment of God of none effect by your traditions."—*Matthew*, chap. xv. verse 6.

* The sacred title of Imaum is, by the Sheahs, given only to the immediate descendants of the prophet, which are twelve. The last of these, the Imaum Mehdy, is supposed by them to be concealed (not dead), and the title which belongs to him cannot, they conceive, be given to another: but among the Soonees it is a dogma, that there must be always a *visible Imaum*, or " father of the church." The title is given to the four learned doctors who are the founders of their faith. It was long maintained that the Imaum must be descended from the Arabian tribe of Koreish: but the Emperors of Constantinople (who are of a Tartar family,) have assumed the sacred title, which they claim on the ground of the formal renunciation of it by Mahomed the Twelfth, the last

CHAP. XXII. orthodox religion. These saints differed from each other in expounding parts of the Koran, and the traditions; but their followers have concurred in tolerating their respective differences, which relate more to forms than essentials, and have become consolidated into one belief, which is termed the Soonee, or, in other words, the belief of those who assent to the Soona, or oral traditions, and consequently acknowledge the first caliphs, from whom most of these traditions were derived, as the chosen companions and legitimate successors of the prophet. The four sects mentioned above, have been denominated the four pillars of the Soonee faith: each has a separate oratory at the Temple of Mecca: but this, and the other distinctions they have preserved, as separate sects, have not disturbed their union, which has been cemented by their common alarm at the progress of schisms, that threatened, if they spread, not only to alter the faith, but to overthrow the whole system of their jurisprudence; which was established upon authorities, the purity and legality of which these heretics openly denied.

An account of the sect of Sheahs.

Among the principal of these schisms was that of the Sheahs; which, as has been before stated, had become, from the commencement of the Suffavean dynasty, the national religion of Persia. The meaning of the term Sheah has been already explained, and a short account has been given of the history of this sect. From the hour of the death of Mahomed, the adherents of Aly had maintained his right of succession to the caliphate, and had deemed those by whom that right had been set aside as the greatest of sinners. The

caliph of the race of Abbas, in favour of Selim the First. The acknowledgment of this title renders the Emperor of Turkey the spiritual head of all orthodox Mahomedans.

talents, the piety, and the reputation of the three first caliphs, preserved the empire from the effects of this spirit of discontent; and the ultimate elevation of Aly satisfied, for a time, the clamour of his friends: but his death, and that of his sons, and the misfortunes of his descendants, who, though admitted to the rank of Imaums, or chief priests, were excluded from all temporal power, led numbers to cherish, in secret, the principles of the sect of Sheah, and to mourn over the hard lot of the direct descendants of their holy prophet. The kingdom of Persia was the first whose inhabitants united in proclaiming themselves of this sect, and who vowed eternal hatred and war against those who professed the Soonee doctrine. More than three centuries* has elapsed since the Sheah faith has become the adopted religion of that country: and, during the whole of that period, a regard for its tenets have either been the cause, or the pretext, of almost every war in which it has been engaged. Surrounded by nations who profess the Soonee doctrine, whether the Persian has been called upon to invade the territories of the Turks, the Affghans, or the Tartars, or to repel the attacks of these nations, he has been always summoned by the same watchword: and the belief that the Sheah faith was in danger, has never failed to rouse him to action. Nâdir Shah, when at the summit of his power, attempted to destroy a feeling, of which he had proved the efficacy for the purpose of defence, because it was likely (as it excited hatred in other nations,) to obstruct his ambitious plans of extended conquest: but the attempt failed, and the attachment of the Persians to

The inhabitants of Persia unite in proclaiming themselves of the Sheah faith.

* Ismail, the first king of the Suffavean race, ascended the throne of Persia in A. D. 1499, and proclaimed the Sheah faith to be the national religion of that country.

CHAP. XXII. their faith continues as decided as ever. It appears, therefore, of importance to understand the character of those feelings which have had, and continue to have, so powerful an influence upon a nation's conduct: and we cannot obtain this knowledge, except by a careful study of the tenets and dogmas which are peculiar to the Sheah sect of Mahomedans.

The difference between the Soonee and Sheah doctrine.

The great and radical difference between the Soonee and Sheah doctrine, arises from the latter maintaining the divine and indefeasible right of Aly to have succeeded to the caliphate at the death of the prophet. His claims, they assert, rested on his being the first convert, and consequently the eldest in the faith; on his nearness of kindred to Mahomed, of whom he was a cousin; and on his having married Fatimah, the only offspring of that prophet. They also affirm, that he was expressly declared his successor*; and that those by whose intrigues he was deprived of his inheritance, acted in direct contradiction to the will of God, as signified through the prophet. The same great temporal and spiritual power, which the adherents of Aly conceive should have immediately descended to him, ought, in their opinion, to have been transmitted to his lineal descendants; and they, consequently, deem not only the three first caliphs, Aboubeker, Omar, and Osman, but all the caliphs who took the title of "Lord of the Faithful," as illegal usurpers of power.

* Sheah writers declare, that when the angel Gabriel informed Mahomed he must prepare to die, that sacred personage proceeded towards Mecca. On the road he came to a place called Khoom-e-Ghuddeer, where he declared Aly his heir. This event occurred on the 18th of Zehadge, and is celebrated by an annual festival, called the Eed-ul-Ghuddeer, or "the festival of Ghuddeer."

This belief is hostile to the whole fabric of the establishment of the Soona, or traditions of the Soonee sect; as those who profess it deny all that part of their traditions which rest upon the authority of the three first caliphs, whose very names are abhorrent to them. The Sheahs, however, admit the legality of the Soona, or traditions, except where the source from whence these are derived is contaminated by crime, or disobedience * to God. Their leading principle throughout, is an adherence to the relations and descendants of Mahomed, whom they deem to have partaken, though in a lesser degree, of his sacred nature: and the title that Sheahs love to be distinguished by, which is that of " the friends of the family," strongly marks this feeling.

Their disbelief of the dogmas of the four Imaums.

The Sheahs both disbelieve and contemn the dogmas of the four great Imaums or saints, who may be termed the founders of the Soonee doctrine. These learned doctors have, they affirm, propagated many erroneous and impious opinions, both in matters of faith and of practice: and they contend, that the worldly policy, which has led to the monstrous compound of their contradictory tenets into one faith, must involve all those who adopt it as a general belief in inexplicable difficulties. They argue, in support of this opinion, that as it is acknowledged there is only one path of truth, it becomes evident, that if the followers of Haneefa, or any other of the Soonee saints, are right, those of the remaining three sects must be wrong: and after all, they ask, " Is it not better to trust to what we have " received from God and his prophet, and from those who lived

* They accuse the three first caliphs of direct disobedience, on the ground of their knowledge of Aly's superior right, and of the prophet's desire that he should be his successor.

CHAP. XXII. "at the period of his mission, and have transmitted his sayings, "than to give our minds over to these pretending doctors of divi-"nity and of law*; and, by doing so, constitute their fallible works "into the standard of our faith, and the rule of our lives†?"

* The orientalists have ever been fond of illustrating arguments by anecdotes. They relate the following of a Sheah doctor of laws, who was summoned to attend a meeting, in which four doctors of the orthodox sects were assembled, to decide whether Sultan Khodâh-bundâh, the great grandson of Chenghiz, could be allowed to take back a wife whom he had divorced three times, without conforming to the prescribed usage, founded on the Soonee law, of her first marrying and cohabiting with another person. The Sheah doctor, with a pretended clownish manner, instead of leaving his slippers at the door of the room in which they assembled, secured them under his arm. This action produced much mirth; and the reason of it was demanded. "We have a "record in my family," said the man, "that one of our ancestors, who lived in the "days of our prophet, had his slippers stolen by a follower of Haneefa!" All burst into laughter; and he was informed, that Haneefa himself did not propagate his doctrine till a century after the prophet's death. "It must have been a follower of Malik then." The mirth became louder, as the ignorant doctor was instructed of the date of Malik, who came after Haneefa. "Then it was Shaffei:" but he was of still later date. "It "must," said the Sheah, in an affected rage, "have been Hanbal!" This holy man, he was informed, did not publish his works till the second century of the Hejirah. The Sheah doctor started back with affected surprise at all this information, and exclaimed: "Why, if all you say is true, these holy saints, whose opinions you desire "to make our laws, lived so long after our prophet, that they could personally know "no more than you and I, gentlemen, except as they might happen to be more or less "learned!" Saying this, he arose and took his departure; but was soon sent for by the king, who asked him if he thought he might take back his wife without first allowing her to be married to another? "If there is no greater authority than the opinion of "these modern saints against it, I can see no sin in your doing so," was the reply. The king was rejoiced, and immediately acted on his opinion: and this circumstance is supposed to have had no slight weight in disposing Mahomed Khodâh-bundâh to believe in the Sheah doctrines.—*Persian MS.*

† Persian MS.

The difference which exists in these points between the Soonee and the Sheah sects is at once rancorous and irreconcileable. It is one in which the passions are easily arrayed; for it relates to no speculative or abstruse points of faith that are difficult to be comprehended, but is interwoven with the history of their general religion. Names which are never mentioned but with blessings by one sect, are hourly cursed by the other. The hypocrisy, ingratitude, and disobedience, of the three first caliphs are the essential dogmas of the Sheah doctrine: while the leading principle of the Soonees is, that, next to the prophet, these rulers were beyond all others the most entitled to the regard and veneration of posterity. It is evident, therefore, that the Soonee and Sheah faith can never exist in any concord with each other. A stranger to the name of Mahomed is more acceptable to a zealous man of either of these religions than the opposite sectary, who insults him with an hourly attack of his favourite tenets; and their disagreement, as has been before stated, relates to matters of faith, or rather opinion, more than of practice. The differences in their mode of worship and customs are slight*, and have wholly arisen out of the hate they bear each other, and their dislike to have any usage in common. Innumerable volumes have been written on the subject of the disputes between the Sheah and Soonee sects. Their effect has been similar to that of most works on religious controversy: they have oftener irritated than convinced: but it is justice to their authors to observe, that these productions frequently display an union of

* These consist in the mode of holding the hands, of the mode of prostration, and other forms equally immaterial.

CHAP. XXII. taste and of learning. Every effort is made in them to arrest the attention of the reader. The arguments are often shaped into a dramatic form to render them more attractive: and the zealous writer condescends to amuse the fancy, in the hope that his doing so may aid his object of informing the judgment.

It has been before observed, that the religion and the laws of a Mahomedan nation always flow from the same fountain; and the consequence is, that they regard, with feelings of sacred veneration, all those by whom their laws are made or expounded. These must, generally speaking, be acknowledged as saints before they are recognised as lawgivers; and an attack upon the sanctity of their character, strikes at once at the faith and the jurisprudence of the countries where their authority is acknowledged. It has ever been one of the greatest disputes between the Soonees and Sheahs, that the latter deny all respect and confidence to the four great lawgivers on whom the whole superstructure of the usages and ordinances, if not the religion, of the former depends. It will elucidate this subject to state some of the objections which they make to the dogmas of these reputed saints.

Their accusation of Haneefa.

Abou Haneefa, who lived* in the first century of the Hejirah, and who is represented to have been a man that united great

* Haneefa-ul-naaman-ebn-Thabet was born in the eightieth year of the Hejirah, and died in the hundred and fiftieth. His followers assert, that he was designated by an huddees, or saying of the prophet, which expressed, that Abou Haneefa was "the lamp of the faithful:" but this doubtful record was probably invented by some zealous disciple to give him superiority over the others. We are told by Ul-Ghazali, a respectable writer, that Haneefa ended his life in prison at Bagdad, where he was confined because he refused to accept the office of judge, for which he thought himself

modesty and piety with a plain solid understanding, and whose tenets are praised on account of their being founded more upon reason than upon traditions, is accused, by the Sheahs, of ignorance and presumption. They assert, that among other deviations from the true path, he departed from the obvious text of the Koran, in allowing his followers to drink wine*, after its spirit had been a little evaporated by boiling; and that he also altered a number of practices regarding prayer and purifications, which are inculcated both in that volume and the admitted traditions. As a proof of the ignorance of this Imaum, the Sheah writer†, with apparent triumph, alleges, that he confessed his inability to decide whether a hermaphrodite could be admitted into paradise, or a geni become perceptible to the human vision! CHAP. XXII.

The second, Imaum Malik, was also born‡ in the first century of the Hejirah; and, if we are to believe Soonee writers, he was not less remarkable than Haneefa for his modesty and piety. We are Of Malik.

unfit. When urged by his friends to take this station to escape persecution, he replied, "I choose rather to be punished by men than by God:" and when asked the reason why he said he was unfit for it, he answered, "If I have spoken the truth, I am unfit; "if I have uttered a falsehood, a liar is not fit to be a judge."—SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 206.

* I follow, in this part, the author of the Absar-ul-Mustubsureen, or "The Eyes of "Acute Observers;" a work of considerable reputation. This writer accuses Haneefa of allowing his disciples to drink *nubeez;* a kind of wine made from dates or raisins; which, he asserts, is in direct opposition to that sacred tradition which states, "that "every thing that intoxicates is wine," and that "every wine is unlawful."—*Absar-ul-Mustubsureen.*

† Absar-ul-Mustubsureen.

‡ The Imaum Abdool Malik was born between the year of the Hejirah ninety and ninety-five, and died A. H. 177.

CHAP. XXII. informed, that out of forty-eight questions which were put to him, he returned thirty-two with a declaration that he could not answer them. "A noble and frank confession of ignorance," observes a Mahomedan writer*, "which could, in a man of such learning and "reputation, have only proceeded from a mind whose sole object "was truth, and the glory of God." This modest and wise doctor, however, is accused, by Sheah writers, of being the bold propagator of falsehood and of vice. They assert†, that he taught that the flesh of all animals, except swine, and beings endowed with reason, might be eaten: and they quote from his own writings to prove, that, in certain cases, he affirmed the legality of a practice which cannot be named, but which all other Mahomedan teachers have concurred in deeming infamous.

Of Shaffei. Shaffei‡, the third Imaum of the Soonees, who was born|| in the second century of the Hejirah, is said, by all Soonee writers, to have been a learned and virtuous man, who laboured to arrange the traditions§ so as to render them useful as a code of laws. He introduced several alterations of religious forms, but advanced few

* Ul-Ghazali.

† Absar-ul-Mustubsureen.

‡ Chardin, in Vol. II. page 237 old edit., observes, that the Sheahs are almost all followers of Shaffei, the Soonees of Haneefa. This is an error of extraordinary magnitude for a writer of so much experience and observation. The Sheahs have, at all periods, held Shaffei and his doctrines in equal abhorrence.

|| Ebn Edris-ul-Shaffei was born at Ascalon in Palestine A. H. 150, educated at Mecca, and died in Egypt A. H. 204.

§ One Mahomedan author wittily observes, "that the relators of the traditions were "asleep till Ul-Shaffei came and awakened them." — SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 208.

doctrines that can be deemed innovations. We may judge of the injustice of his enemies from the character of their accusations; one of the principal of which is, that this Imaum departed from that text of the Koran which prohibits gambling, by allowing his disciples to indulge in the recreation of a few games of chess *. CHAP. XXII.

Hanbal, the fourth Imaum, was born † in the second century: he was at first an opposer, and afterwards a follower of Ul-Shaffei, from whom he boasted to have learnt most of the traditions he knew: and we are assured that he was able to repeat a million ‡. This Imaum appears to have been bolder than any of his predecessors, and to have taught doctrines which subjected him to the most cruel persecution. The Sheahs accuse him, not only of having allowed his followers to relieve occasional lowness of spirits by the use of intoxicating drugs ||, but of propagating the most profane doctrines regarding the nature of the Almighty, whom his followers, they assert, were taught to believe was a corporeal being. Of Hanbal.

One Sheah author § describes the God of the sect of Hanballee as "having curled locks; of being immaterial from the head to

* He limited them to three games at one sitting.

† Ebn Hanbal was born in A. H. 164. Some authors state, that "he was born at "Merv, in Khorassan, of which city his parents were natives; and that his mother "brought him from thence to Bagdad at her breast: while others assure us, that she "was with child of him when she came to Bagdad, and that he was born there."— SALE's *Preliminary Discourse on the Koran*, page 208.

‡ Hamilton's Commentary on Mahomedan Laws, P. D. page 29.

|| He allowed, the author of the Absar-ul-Mustubsureen asserts, his disciples to take *bung*, a very intoxicating drug, in a quantity not exceeding the size of a pistachio nut; which, another Sheah writer remarks, was probably the learned doctor's own dose.

§ I translate from the Absar-ul-Mustubsureen.

CHAP. XXII. "the breast; but consisting, from the breast downwards, of one "solid soft mass:" and he asserts, that this learned doctor explained that verse in the Koran which states, that "the merciful "God is upon the heavens," to mean, "that the Deity sat four "fingers above the firmament in such a manner, that his knees "reached below it." He adds, that the followers of Hanbal have proclaimed opinions still more impious. "They believe," he informs us, "that on the day of resurrection, when men shall be "called before God to worship him, Fatimah, the daughter of "Mahomed, shall advance to the judgment-seat to petition for "justice on the murderers of her sons, Hussein and Hussun: but "God, they say, will show his thigh, and display a cloth that covers "a wound upon it; while a voice will be heard to exclaim, 'That "arrow which Nimrod* shot at heaven with intention to destroy me "wounded my thigh. I have not permitted it to heal, that I might "show it you; and that you should know, that, if the God you "adore sustained so great a wrong from a being whom he created, "you should not be surprised at the sufferings your sons endured "from their own tribe.'" The followers of this doctor, the same writer observes, assert, "that the Almighty had one day a pain "in his eyes†, and that he informed the inquiring angels that it was "an inflammation, brought on by the torrents of tears which he "had shed at the deluge:" and they also affirm, "that every "Thursday night God assumes the shape of a beautiful boy, and

* According to Mahomedan legends, Nimrod pretended to divine power, and shot an arrow at the heavens to kill the Almighty.

† The author of the Absar-ul-Mustubsureen states, that he takes this fact from the Mouakiff, a work which he asserts is held in high estimation by the sect of Hanballee.

"descends from heaven upon an Egyptian ass; and that it was very "common to build a small manger on the tops of their mosques, "near which they burnt incense, and deposited some fine straw "and grain, which was declared to be for the refreshment of the "animal on which the Almighty rode, in the event of his descending "at that spot."

It is evident, from this example, that the Sheah writers endeavour to defame and discredit the Imaums, or saints, of the Soonees, by ascribing to them not only every doctrine that has been propagated by the most absurd or visionary of their followers, but those of other sects. The impious tenets which are here charged upon the disciples of Hanbal, should properly be ascribed to those of the Ebn-ul-Keram, the celebrated founder of the schism of the Keramites; a sect which, by their literal acceptation of the figurative parts of the Koran, have been led into a gross heresy, that is deemed at once monstrous and blasphemous by almost all other Mahomedans, who, generally speaking, entertain the purest and most sublime belief of the divine nature and attributes of the Almighty.

The Sheahs also accuse the four Soonee Imaums of having altered several sacred institutions, particularly that of the division of the khums*, or fifth share of spoil taken in war; regarding which,

* The khums is described in the Koran as the property of God, his prophet, and his relations, or men of his tribe, (Benee Haschim,) who are poor and destitute. The right of the Benee Haschim to a share in the khums is grounded upon their being excluded from any portion of the zukaat. The author of the Ubsar-ul-Mustubsureen expressly states, that when "the one fifth of the whole of the captured property had been separated, Mahomed divided it into *six* portions; *three* of which "the prophet took for himself, and the three remaining he divided equally among "orphans, beggars, and travellers, of the tribe of Benee Haschim, to compensate them

CHAP. XXII. they affirm, they have established doctrines at complete variance with the practice of Mahomed and the text of the Koran. They also assert, that they have altered forms of prayer, and made deviations on other points from what is enjoined by traditions of acknowledged authority, for the express and sole object of establishing usages* opposite to those of the Sheahs; and on all these grounds they hold the names of Haneefa, Malik, Shaffei, and Hanbal, in complete abhorrence, and consider as wanderers from the true path all who follow their abominable and heretical doctrines.

It would be tedious to enter into a methodical disquisition of the innumerable points of difference between these two Mahomedan sects: a short reference to some of their most popular productions will be the best mode of elucidating the character of their opposite tenets, and of showing the style of their most esteemed theological disputants.

Heresies with which the Sheahs are charged.

In a letter, written by some priests of the Soonee sect, that accompanied the army of a Tartar monarch† who attacked Mushed,

" for the religious charity (zukaat), in which, by the Koran, it was considered unlawful " for them to share."

It is one of the most serious charges which the Sheah writers make against the three first caliphs, that they altered this usage, and took the whole of the khums to themselves, to the exclusion of the sacred family, and the tribe of the prophet: but we find it stated in a learned work on Mahomedan law, that, according to the Soonees, shares of the khums should be given to orphans, the poor, and travellers.—*Commentary on Mahomedan law*, Vol. II. page 179.

* The Soonees are accused of making the tops of graves convex instead of flat, (the shape ordered by a tradition,) for no reason but opposition to the Sheahs.—*Absar-ul-Mustubsureen.*

† Obeid Ullah, sovereign of the Usbegs. This monarch was the nephew of the celebrated Shahibeg Khan, the conqueror. He commenced his reign about A. D. 1542.

we find, compressed in a short compass, a catalogue of those heresies with which the Sheahs are charged, and for which they are justly doomed (if we are to believe the authors of this violent anathema,) to total destruction in this world, and everlasting misery in that to come. They are accused of not only denying the authority, but of vilifying the character of those who are declared in the Koran to be the chosen companions of the holy prophet. They are reminded, that even Aly, the Lord of the Faithful, whose undaunted valour was never questioned, submitted to the rule of the three first caliphs; and that these cannot be accused of usurpation, without implicating him in an act of base submission to illegal authority. The Sheahs are upbraided in this letter* with the calumnies they have uttered against Ayesha, and are accused of having dishonoured the sacred name of the prophet by their abuse of his wife. They are, on the ground of these, and many other heresies, denounced, by the writers of this anathema, as the worst of infidels. "Your pro-"perty," these observe, "is legitimate plunder for those who "fight for the true faith: and as to the fields and gardens in the "vicinity of Mushed, which, you inform us†, are the unalienable "property of the holy shrine of the Imaum Rezâ, to which sacred "purpose they were consecrated by the ancestors of the present "Monarchs of Persia, we can only reply, that, in a country which it "is proper and lawful to plunder, the army of the faithful cannot "stop to distinguish the lands which have been appropriated for

* Letter of the oulimah, or religious men, of Maver-ul-Naher to the Sheahs of Mushed.

† There would appear, from this remark, to have been some previous correspondence; but I have never seen any letter except this, and the reply to it.

CHAP. XXII. "religious purposes, from those that belong to its profane inhabit-"ants: but, supposing the distinction made, the revenues of this "holy property would, after all, be expended by true believers: and "if it cannot, from the nature of circumstances, be given to those "who should receive it, it becomes the duty of our conquering "prince to divide it, in legal shares, among his brave warriors."

This anathema, the justice of which is supported by verses from the Koran, by traditions, and by stanzas from pious poets, breathes the same spirit, and recapitulates the same arguments which are to be found in the declarations of all the Soonee princes who have invaded Persia since the Sheah doctrine was established as the national religion of that country. This particular document has probably been preserved, on account of the eloquent answer which was sent to it by a Sheah priest *, who was, at this period, resident in the City of Mushed.

Their refutation of them.

This able divine, whose name was Moollah Mahomed, declares, in the commencement of his letter, that he intends to oppose to the charges of heresy which have been made against the Sheahs, no arguments but what are taken from the Koran; and from those traditions, the authenticity of which are acknowledged by the learned of both sects, he proceeds to prove, from one † of these authorities, that when the prophet was dying, he heard disputes in his chamber, and called for pen, ink, and paper, exclaiming to those around him, "I wish to write what will keep you in the true path after my "death." But Omar (the future caliph) forbad it to be given,

* This priest is called, in the original MS., Moollah Mahomed Roostumdaree: but the latter term was, no doubt, the name of his tribe, or family.

† The Mouakiff, by Humdee. This fact is also mentioned in the Saheb-e-Bachara.

observing, that Mahomed was in a delirium. "Have we not the "Koran?" he added, "and what more can we want?" The prophet, enraged at these words, and at their disputes, commanded them to leave him. He adduces other acts of disobedience in the three first caliphs; and concludes, on the authority of that verse of the Koran which states, "He who obeys not the person I have "sent, is an infidel," that they were infidels, and ought to have been excluded, on that ground alone, (even if they had possessed legal claims,) from succeeding to the high dignity of the caliphate.

The writer of this letter denies the truth of that tradition which has been brought forward to prove that Mahomed praised the caliphs; but observes, that, if admitted, it proves nothing; for that his praise could only have had relation to their past lives, and can never, therefore, be used as a shield to cover those errors and crimes* which they subsequently committed. He ridicules the importance which the Soonee divines have given to the term companion, which Mahomed used to Aboubeker when he was concealed with him in the cave. "The obvious signification of the word is," he observes, "the best refutation of such an argument. It merely means the person "that is with another, and has no relation to their virtue or religion:" and to prove this, he asserts, that "the most learned commentators "have declared, that the prophet, on this occasion, quoted the very

* The author does not deny that the prophet might have had prescience of their guilt: but this, he states, gave him no power to prevent it. Aly, he adds, returned his sword to the son of Muljim, observing, "I shall be slain by that weapon; but justice "forbids my preserving my life by the commission of a crime:" and such that holy personage deemed the punishment of guilt before its perpetration.

CHAP. XXII. "expression* used by Joseph when he was imprisoned in Egypt: and "the companions," he adds, "who were addressed by the son of "Jacob, were both idolaters."

In answer to the accusation that Aly, by submitting to the elevation of the other caliphs, has acknowledged their right, he replies, "that the number of followers they had collected, and the measures "which they had adopted while Aly was occupied with the obsequies "of the prophet, made it impossible for him to assert his right, without "a civil war; which, whatever had been its issue, would have caused "great bloodshed. This forbearance," he adds, "can never be "adduced as an argument against his right; for Aly, though brave, "was certainly exceeded in courage by his uncle, Mahomed; who, "when surrounded by the first heroes of the faithful, fled before the "infidels of the tribe of Koreish, and, after a long period, was "rejoiced to obtain a truce: yet this event never led to a conclusion "that the Koreish were right, or that the prophet, by making peace "with them, admitted them to be so. But it is evident," says our author, "that God himself has often shown forbearance towards "infirm mortals, who have aspired to his throne: and if the "Almighty," he concludes, "clothed in all his power, has, for "inscrutable causes, acted in this manner to the wicked, who shall "dare to arraign the conduct of Moortezâ Aly upon this occasion?"

Though Mahomedans are generally agreed that power can neither descend to, or be transmitted by, females, the Sheahs labour to prove

* When Mahomed was in the cave, he exclaimed, "Oh! my two companions in "this prison, is your trust in many gods, or do you believe in him who has no com- "panion in power, and is invincible, and omnipotent?"

that Fatimah, the only offspring of Mahomed, was an exception to this rule; and that Aly had an additional claim to succeed his uncle, from having married her: while the right of his descendants to inherit the throne was still stronger, from their being the only race who could boast the blood of the prophet. But they refuse that respect for the wives which they claim for the daughter of Mahomed, and justify the abuse of Ayesha, with which the Soonees charge them, by urging, that she not only joined Moâveah in making war upon Aly, whom she knew to be the appointed successor* of her husband, but departed, by appearing at the head of an army, from the law which the prophet had laid down, regarding that privacy in which it was the duty of the female sex to live. The author here followed, supports this latter accusation against Ayesha, by asserting, that it is written in one of the most authentic books of tradition, that when a blind man † was sitting with the prophet, one of his wives passed through the room. The lady, on being reproved, observed, that the man was blind. "But thou seest," was the answer of Mahomed; which, to those who believe in this tradition, is received as a law, which prohibits a female from gazing on the form of any man but her husband, or nearest male kindred. The same writer repels the attack made upon his sect, of including the sacred character of the prophet in the reproaches they have thrown upon Ayesha ‡. "If you were to establish," he tells his opponents, "a

* All Sheah authors assume, that Mahomed positively declared, on one occasion, his desire that Aly should be his successor.

† His name was Omah Mukhtoom.

‡ "Soonee authors," Moollah Mahomed states, "have written that the holy "prophet placed Ayesha upon his shoulders, in order that she might see a show in the "public street; and that after she had looked at it for some time, he exclaimed, 'O

CHAP. XXII. "necessary connexion of character between a man and his wife, the "conclusion would not only prove fatal to the reputation of Mahomed, "but to the good prophets, Noah and Lot; and Assiah, the virtuous "consort of Pharaoh, would become implicated in all the guilt of her "wicked and impious husband."

The Sheahs had, in a prior communication, claimed some consideration, on the ground of their being admitted to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, and associating, when there, with wise and pious men. To this their enemies had replied, in the words of the poet Jami*, "He who has not good in his heart can derive no benefit from "looking upon the countenance of the prophet." An inaccuracy in this quotation gave Moollah Mahomed an advantage, which he seized with all the skill of an able disputant. "I certainly expected," he observes, "that men who have, or ought to have, read the Koran, "and all the commentaries upon that sacred volume, could have "copied a Persian stanza without a mistake; but you have altered "and rendered ungrammatical the words of the poet: no "doubt conceiving, that after you had plundered and defaced his "native province, it was but a trifling additional injury to spoil one "of the beautiful lines of the celebrated Jami. This," he concludes,

"my red-cheeked! art thou yet satisfied with the show?' She replied, 'No.' This "story," the indignant Sheah author adds, "which you relate of Mahomed, would not "be believed if told of the most depraved of men; and, indeed, its enormity appears "beyond all comment."

* The poet Jami, who takes his name from the village of Jam, near Herat, where he was born, was not more famous for his fancy and skill as a poet, than for his learning and sanctity as a divine. His poems (many of which are very beautiful) breathe, in every line, the most sacred rapture; and hence they are oftener quoted by the writers on theology than those of any other poet.

"may appear a light remark, but it may be useful in teaching you "not to be precipitate in forming a judgment on what you do not "thoroughly understand*."

A number of proofs are brought forward by this writer to establish the superiority of the Sheah faith; but he concludes by stating, that if those who believe in this faith are wrong, that is no cause why they should be doomed to destruction. "What knowledge," he demands of his antagonists, "can you have of the inward thoughts of "those on whom you have pronounced so dreadful a sentence? "The passions of kings are as a consuming flame, on which it "behoves wise and good men to pour the water of moderate "councils: but the anathema you have promulgated is, in the "hands of the soldier, the pretext for every excess and violence. "And suppose," he adds, "that they who suffer from this act "were infidels; such a proceeding could never be pleasing to God; "for it is written, that, in the day of judgment, Noah shall stand "abashed in the presence of his Creator, for having desired the "death of sinners."

Among the works which have been written on the subject of the difference between the Soonee and Sheah sects, the latter esteem none more than a small tract, called Hussunneah, composed by one of their most learned divines; who, to mark his contempt for his adversaries, has made a female slave, whose name he has given to his work, the successful champion of the tenets of his faith, in a public dispute, supposed to have been held before the celebrated caliph, Haroun-ul-Rusheed. It appears impossible to convey a

* MS. Letter of Moollah Mahomed.

CHAP. XXII. better idea of the arguments by which the Sheahs support the principal dogmas of their belief, or of the style in which such subjects are treated, than by giving a translation of a part of this popular work; which, after shortly describing the history and character of Hussunneah, gives an account of the first day of her disputation before the Caliph of Bagdad.

The learned author* informs us, " that a merchant at Bagdad, " when reduced to poverty from the persecution he had suffered " on account of his religious persuasion, applied to a favourite and " accomplished female slave to know what he should do to save " himself from utter ruin. This lady, whose name was Hussunneah, " or ' the beautiful,' and who had been carefully educated in the " principles of the Sheah sect, in the house of the holy Imaum " Jaffier †, advised her master to go to the palace of Haroun-ul-" Rusheed and offer her for sale. ' Demand,' said she, ' a hundred " thousand pieces of gold ‡: and if the caliph should ask why you " put this immoderate value upon your slave, tell him to assemble " his ablest disputants on points of theology, and say confidently " that she will refute them all.' The merchant replied, ' I can " never consent to this plan: the bigoted tyrant || will be en-

* Shaikh Abool Futtovah.

† Jaffier was the sixth Imaum. He was born A. H. 83, and died in A. H. 148. The scene is laid in the commencement of the reign of Haroun, about A. H. 170, twenty-two years after the Imaum died: but the original only states, that Hussunneah was educated in Jaffier's family, not by him.

‡ The term in the original is dinar zere caliphate, a coin, the value of which may be calculated at nine shillings and twopence.

|| The Sheahs always speak of Haroun-ul-Rusheed as a tyrant, on account of his persecution of the sect of Aly.

" chanted by the praises I utter of thee, and take thee from me; " and I cannot exist without thee, who art the only delight I have " left in this universe.'—' Fear not,' said Hussunneah; ' for, by " the blessing of the holy family of the prophet, no power shall " separate me, while I live, from thee: rise up, and trust in God, who " will order every thing for the best.' After much importunity, he " was persuaded to go to Bermukee*, the vizier of Haroun; to " whom he stated his own situation, and the qualifications of his " slave. The vizier directed him to bring her. The distressed mer- " chant did as he was commanded. When Bermukee contemplated " her beauty, and heard her eloquence and wisdom, he was struck " with admiration. He proceeded instantly to his master, to whom " he explained all he had heard and seen. Hussunneah was ordered " to attend. She came before the caliph veiled, and recited some " verses in his praise, which quite delighted him. He desired her " to unveil; and found her face was a just index of her mind. " Haroun sent for her master, and inquired the price of his slave. " He replied, that it was one hundred thousand pieces of gold. " Haroun demanded, in a rage, how he could ask such a price? " ' I ask it,' said the man, because I know that the assembled " religious men of your dominions will be unable to contend with " her in a theological argument.' Haroun exclaimed in anger, " ' Will you consent, if your slave should lose the victory, that " I shall strike off your head, and take her for nothing?'—' What " will you do,' said the man, ' if she is not defeated?'—' I

* This, no doubt, means the celebrated Jaffier Bermukee, who was, for seventeen years, the favourite vizier of Haroun-ul-Rusheed.

CHAP. XXII. "will not only,' said the caliph, 'give you one hundred thousand "dinars, but your slave back again.' The merchant hesitated: "'Allow me,' said he, 'a little time, that I may again see "Hussunneah?' Haroun consented: and he went and spoke to "his slave, who requested him not to hesitate a moment in ac-"cepting the conditions which had been offered; adding, that, "through the aid of the holy prophet, she firmly hoped to triumph "over her opponents. The merchant returned to Haroun, and "agreed to his terms: on which the caliph immediately sent for "Hussunneah, and asked her what faith she professed? 'I profess "the faith of the prophet and his descendants,' said she, 'thanks "be to God!' Haroun next asked who she considered to be the "proper successor of the prophet? Hussunneah replied, 'Oh "Haroun, assemble thy learned men, and then I shall state all I "can; and if any one object to my faith, he will speak, and "I shall answer him.' Haroun understood from this that she "was one of the adherents of the family*; or, in modern phrase, "a Sheah. He immediately called his minister, Bermukee, and "said, 'This slave is not of our faith, let her be put to death.' "The minister replied: 'O Commander of the Faithful! she has "undertaken a great task, and one in which she will probably "fail. The moment of her discomfiture will be the proper one "for her execution: but if she succeed in confuting the holy "and wise men of the empire, it would be wrong to put such

* The title of Ahely Bayt, or "adherents of the holy family of the prophet," is one of which the Sheahs are very proud. They deem it a distinction between them and those Mahomedans who have neglected, injured, and persecuted his descendants.

CHAP. XXII.

" a person to death; on the contrary, she will merit favour and " notice.' Haroun was satisfied with these observations, and ordered " all the learned men* in his kingdom to be assembled. About " four hundred obeyed this summons; among whom, Ibrahim Nizam, " of Bussorah, was deemed the first in sanctity and in knowledge. " He had composed many works on theology, and a hundred " volumes of his writing had been dispersed over Syria and Egypt. " When this distinguished personage arrived at the capital, the prin- " cipal inhabitants and nobles were directed to pay their respects " to him; and when the assembly met, he was placed in a golden " chair, as a mark of his pre-eminence, and of the favour he en- " joyed. As soon as the caliph was seated, Hussunneah was called. " She came veiled, attended by some women: and, after paying " her respects to Haroun-ul-Rusheed, and wishing him prosperity " and health, she proceeded, without waiting to have her place " pointed out, to a seat which was on a level with that of Ibrahim " Nizam, who looked quite magnificent in his golden chair.

" Haroun made a signal to Hussunneah to commence the dis- " putation. She immediately comprehending him, turned to Ibrahim " Nizam and said, 'Thou art the man who hast spread one hundred " volumes of thy works among mankind, and who considerest thyself " heir to the knowledge of the holy prophet, (on whom be the bless- " ing of God!)' Ibrahim Nizam replied in a rage, 'Dost thou begin " to treat me with contempt? But what business can I have to

* In the Persian MS. they are termed moollahs, which may be translated " learned " men." Shaffei is described as one of the chief of those at Bagdad, and his fame appears grounded on a victory he had obtained in a public disputation over Abou Yusoof Razee.

CHAP. XXII. "argue with a female slave? Indeed it is clear that my doing so "will bring ridicule upon my holy profession.'—'It will be more "honourable to your character and that of your profession,' said "the Vizier Bermukee, to object to the reasoning of Hussunneah, "than to her sex. It is a maxim,' he added, 'among disputants, "that words are to be attended to, not persons.' Encouraged "by this, Hussunneah said, 'Oh Ibrahim! by the grace of God "I shall bring thee to the ground, with disgrace, from that golden "chair in which thou art now seated!' and she began to put questions to him: but Ibrahim stopped her, and said, 'I have come "from a distance, and have on that ground the first right of interrogation.'—'Very well,' said Hussunneah, 'take the advantage "which you desire, question me.' The learned man commenced, "and received the most eloquent answers to seventy questions "that he put to Hussunneah. It is not necessary to say more "upon these, than that she replied to them all in the most prompt "and convincing manner, and that Haroun-ul-Rusheed and his "whole Court were filled with wonder and admiration at the "display of her extraordinary talent and genius. Hussunneah observing the impression she had made, said, "O Ibrahim, this "mode of proceeding is very tedious, I fear the caliph will become "weary: allow me now to interrogate you.' Ibrahim replied, 'I "have yet three more questions to ask; if you answer them, I "shall be satisfied.'—'Ask them,' replied the lady. 'Well, Hussunneah,' said he, 'declare who you think should have succeeded "the holy prophet.'—'The person,' she replied, 'who was oldest "in the faith.'—'Who was the oldest in the faith?' said the "moollah. She answered, 'Aly, who was the son-in-law, cousin,

" and adopted brother of the holy prophet.' The brow of Haroun " was clouded with a frown at this answer. This Ibrahim saw, and " became bolder. 'Tell me,' said he to Hussunneah, on what " ground thou considerest Aly the oldest in the faith. I say that " Aboubeker was forty years of age when he embraced the reli- " gion of our prophet, and at that time Aly was a boy; and the " belief or unbelief, the obedience or disobedience, of a child is of " little consequence.' Hussunneah instantly exclaimed, 'If I prove " to you that the faith and obedience, or want of belief and " disobedience, of a boy has consequence, and that a child, as you " term him, is amenable to divine reward or punishment; wilt thou " confess the faith of Aly in his boyhood?' Ibrahim replied, 'If thou " dost this by sound and convincing argument, I will confess it.' " 'Well,' said Hussunneah, 'what say you regarding the boy that " Elias * put to death, as stated in the story of that prophet and of

* The text of the Koran calls the person who travelled with Moses Ul-Kadr, a saint who is believed by Mahomedans to be the same as Elias; though some have confounded him with Phineas, and others with St. George. It is believed by all commentators that Ul-Kadr is the saint to whom Mahomed alludes in the account he has given, in the eighteenth chapter of the Koran, of the adventures of Moses; a tale which will excite more curiosity in an English reader, from its being obviously that on which the beautiful story of Parnell's Hermit is founded. "*And coming to the rock,*" the Koran states, " they (Moses and his servant Joshua, the son of Nun) found one of " our servants, unto whom we had granted mercy from us, and whom we had taught " wisdom from before us. And Moses said unto him, 'Shall I follow thee, that thou " mayest teach me part of that which thou hast been taught, for a direction unto me? " He answered, 'Verily thou canst not bear with me; for how canst thou patiently " suffer those things, the knowledge whereof thou dost not comprehend? Moses " replied, 'Thou shalt find me patient, if God please; neither will I be disobedient unto " thee in any thing.' He said, 'If thou follow me, therefore, ask me not concerning any

CHAP. XXII. "Moses, which is handed down to us in the holy Koran? What do "you say to the answer which Elias gave to Moses, when interro-

"thing, until I shall declare the meaning thereof unto thee.' So they both went on by "the sea-shore, until they went up into a ship: and he made a hole therein. And "Moses said unto him, 'Hast thou made a hole therein that thou mightest drown those "who are on board? Now hast thou done a strange thing.' He answered, 'Did I not "tell thee that thou couldest not bear with me?' Moses said, 'Rebuke me not, because I "did forget; and impose not on me a difficulty in what I am commanded.' Wherefore "they left the ship, and proceeded until they met with a youth, and he slew him. "Moses said, 'Hast thou slain an innocent person, without his having killed another? "Now hast thou committed an unjust action.' He answered, 'Did I not tell thee that "thou couldest not bear with me?' Moses said, 'If I ask thee concerning any thing "hereafter, suffer me not to accompany thee: now hast thou received an excuse from "me.' They went forward, therefore, until they came to the inhabitants of a certain "city, and they asked food of the inhabitants thereof; but they refused to receive "them. And they found therein a wall, which was ready to fall down; and he set it "upright. Whereupon Moses said unto him, 'If thou wouldest thou mightest doubt-"less have received a reward for it.' He answered, 'This shall be a separation between "me and thee: but I will first declare unto thee the signification of that which thou "couldest not bear with patience. The vessel belonged to certain poor men who did "their business in the sea: and I was minded to render it unserviceable, because there "was a king behind them, who took every sound vessel by force. As to the youth, "his parents were true believers, and we feared lest he, being an unbeliever, should "oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude: wherefore we desired that "their Lord might give them a more righteous child in exchange for him, and one "more affectionate towards them. And the wall belonged to two orphan youths in "the city, and under it was a treasure hidden which belonged to them; and their "father was a righteous man: and thy Lord was pleased that they should attain their "full age, and take forth their treasure, through the mercy of thy Lord. And I did "not what thou hast seen of mine own will, but by God's direction. This is the inter-"pretation of that which thou couldest not bear with patience." — SALE's *Koran*, Vol. II. p. 117, 118, 119.

" gated on the murder of the child? 'As to the boy,' said he, 'his " parents were believers, and we feared lest he, being an unbeliever, " should oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude.' " 'Now tell me, Ibrahim, was it proper to put this boy to death, or " was Elias unjust? If Elias was unjust, is it not extraordinary that " he should be praised by the Almighty, and his praises are written " in the Koran?' Ibrahim was at a loss how to answer. 'I abandon " this point,' said he: 'but what do you say regarding *Aly*, and " Abbas, his uncle; they disputed with each other regarding the " right of inheritance to the prophet; each asserted he had the right, " and they carried their complaints to Aboubeker. When two " persons go to a judge, one must be right, and one wrong.' The " design of Ibrahim in putting this insidious question was to oblige " Hussunneah either to offend the caliph, and hazard her life, by de- " claring Abbas (who was the immediate ancestor* of Haroun-ul- " Rusheed) in the wrong; or, should the fear of that danger lead to " pronounce Aly wrong, to make her give up the whole argument, " and abandon her creed. Hussunneah, in reply, observed, 'I must, " Ibrahim, answer thy question from the holy Koran.'—'Let us hear " it,' said the learned man. 'God,' said Hussunneah, 'has stated, " through the prophet, that the angels Michael and Gabriel carried a " dispute before David, in order to expose more strongly the crime of " that monarch, in taking the wife of his poor subject Uriah. Now " tell me, Ibrahim, which of these two disputing angels were in the " wrong, and which in the right?'—'Both,' said Ibrahim, 'were in

* Abbas was the uncle of Mahomed. His grandson was promoted to the dignity of caliph; and the house of Abbas enjoyed power for several centuries. Haroun was the fifth caliph of this family.

 "the right; and it was to correct and punish David that they went "before that monarch with their dispute.'—'Thank God for this "admission,' said Hussunneah: 'and, in like manner, both Moorteza "Aly and Abbas were in the right; and it was to correct the crime "of Aboubeker that they went before him. Abbas said, 'The right of "inheritance is mine, because I am the uncle of the prophet.' Aly "said, 'It belongs to me, as his cousin, son-in-law, adopted brother, "and heir, and his daughter is now in my house, and Hussein and "Hussun (who are the lords of the Syuds and the sacred inheritors of "paradise) are my children: I am indeed identified with the prophet.' "When* Aboubeker heard all this, he said: 'God knows whose claim "is just; but I have myself heard the prophet say, 'Aly is my heir †, "and the lord of my religion.' When Abbas heard this expression "from the mouth of Aboubeker, he was enraged, and said, O "Aboubeker, if thou hast heard this speech from the holy prophet, "how camest it that thou sittest where thou art, as caliph, to the "injury of Aly's right, as declared by thyself?' Aboubeker now "perceived that both parties had come to expose his guilt. 'You "are come,' he observed, 'to quarrel with me, not to appeal to my "decision as a ruler:' and having said this, he immediately left the "assembly. When Ibrahim heard this reply from Hussunneah, he "said, that he also gave up this point: 'But tell me,' he added, "which you consider the most excellent, Aly, or his uncle Abbas?' "Tell me,' said Hussunneah quickly, 'which you deem most excel-

* The Sheah author adds a curse to the name of the first caliph.

† By another reading of this term in the MS. it is, "payer of my debts," which is synonimous with heir, as it describes one of the first and most sacred of the duties of a legal inheritor.

" lent, Humzah or his nephew Mahomed? Why do you puzzle " yourself so much with Aly and Abbas? If Aly was the most " excellent, it was the glory of Abbas to have such a nephew; and if " Abbas was superior, it must add to the honour of Aly to have had " such an uncle.' Haroun, who had marked with wonder the " ingenuity and ability of Hussunneah, turned to Ibrahim Nizam, " and said, ' I pity thy knowledge.'

" Hussunneah having answered all the questions which had been " put to her, observed, that she now required permission to ask one " of her holy and learned antagonist; ' and if he can reply to that " in a satisfactory manner,' she added, ' I will confess myself con- " quered. Tell me, Ibrahim,' said she, ' when the prophet left this " earth, did he nominate an *heir*, or did he not?' Ibrahim said, " ' He did not.'—' Was this omission,' said she, ' an error, or was it " right? and was the election of a caliph an error, or was it right in " those by whom it was made? To which do you ascribe the error, " Ibrahim, to the prophet or to the caliph?' Ibrahim gave no " answer: he could not say the prophet had committed an error, " without injury to the faith; and if he admitted the caliph had " been in the wrong, he gave up the point in dispute to Hussun- " neah. He had also a dread of Haroun, and was silent from " reflection. This distress for an answer was evident to all; a smile " was to be seen on every face in the assembly; and the wise " man of Bussorah was reproached with being defeated by a " woman."

The work from which this has been translated gives a sequel of disputations regarding dogmas on which the Sheahs and Soonees entertain opposite sentiments: in all of these disputes the palm of

victory is given to Hussunneah; and it adds, that the Caliph Haroun-ul-Rusheed, convinced by her statements, desisted from his persecution of the Syuds; that he also gave her, according to the terms fixed, a hundred thousand pieces of gold, and directed her to return to her master, on whom he bestowed a dress of honour. He, however, secretly advised this heroine of the Sheah faith to leave Bagdad, lest some misfortune should happen to her. The lady left the assembly in triumph; and, independent of the presents she received from Haroun, many were bestowed upon her by princes of the blood, and other great persons. Ibrahim Nizam, the author informs us, came down from his golden chair quite ashamed, and retired with Abou Yusoof, Shaffei, and some others of the enemies of the Sheahs: the people laughed at them; and a cousin of Haroun was particularly witty at their expense. But, notwithstanding this approbation, Hussunneah and the merchant, fearful of the effects of the victory she had obtained, departed from the city, as the caliph had advised, and took up their abode at Medinah.

The Persian author of this work says, that when he was returning from Mecca he stopped at Damascus, and obtained from a Syud of Syria the Arabic manuscript which he has translated. The name of the translator is not given. The probability is, that the book was first written in Persian; and it is ascribed to Shaikh Abool Futtovah, of Rhe, a very eminent and zealous divine of the Sheah sect.

According to the doctrine of the Sheahs, a man may, under circumstances of danger, not only conceal his faith, but make a temporary profession of contrary sentiments. The adoption of this unmanly tenet has been originally forced upon this sect, in consequence of the oppressed and persecuted state in which they so long

remained: and the pride of the Persians has brooked its continuance rather than abandon the pilgrimage to Mecca, which they cannot perform without testifying, as they visit the tombs of the first caliphs, a respect for their memory *, which is contrary to their belief. The strictness with which the Soonee possessors of Mecca have continued to enforce these concessions, have greatly diminished the number of pilgrims from Persia; the mass of the population of that country being satisfied with a pilgrimage to the sepulchre of Aly and his sons Hussein and Hussun, whose remains are deposited at Nujuff and Kerbelah, which are situated in the province of Bagdad; or to that of the Imaum Rezâ, at Mushed, in Khorassan. The sepulchres of these saints of Sheah worship have been enriched with the most magnificent presents by pious devotees: monarchs have emulated each other in adding to their revenue, and in increasing the splendor of their appearance. In the mode of worship observed at these shrines, as at Mecca, many ceremonies have been introduced that border upon a superstition, which is remote from that principle of pure Deism upon which the Mahomedan religion is professedly grounded. But the followers of the Prophet of Arabia have relaxed from the primitive principles of their religion, and have granted a species of adoration

* It is not a duty of the Sheahs to curse the first caliphs; but this reserve is more from prudence than feeling. When they hear them execrated, they never pass a heavier censure on the individual who does it, than to blame his indiscreet zeal. Omar is the particular object of their hatred. This probably proceeds from the great character of that caliph. I was one day conversing with a very sensible and moderate Persian upon the history of Omar, and praising him as the greatest of all the caliphs. He assented to all the facts I stated, but said, *Een hummâh râst est laiken aukher sag-bood;* "This is all true, but he was a dog after all."

CHAP. XXII. not only to him and his immediate descendants, but to a number of learned or pious men, who have been canonized as saints. The feelings of gratitude and veneration which the conduct of individuals * first created, has grown,—by excessive indulgence, and by the ardour of passions excited by contrary opinions,—into sacred reverence and devotion. Their very garments have become relics † of inestimable value; and in the course of time the same properties have been assigned to them as are supposed to have belonged to their possessors. From this common progress of superstition hardly one of the numerous sects into which the Mahomedan religion is divided can be deemed exempt ‡. The Sheahs not only

* The incredible veneration paid to the early martyrs and confessors, by their pious contemporaries, was the cause of many evils in the Christian Church.

† There are relics which are deemed sacred at almost every shrine, particularly at that of Aly, at Nujuff.

‡ The modern sect of Wâhâbee pretend that they are an exception to this observation. This sect was founded near a century ago, by an Arab of the name of Shaikh Mahomed, the son of Abdool Wâhâb, whose name they have taken. Shaikh Mahomed connected himself in the attempt to reform the religion of his country with Ebn-Saoud, the Prince of Dereah, the capital of the Province of Nujuddee. Through the efforts of the saint, and the aid of the temporal power of Ebn-Saoud, and his son and successor Abdool Azeez, the religion of the Wâhâbees is now established all over the peninsula of Arabia. The tenets of this sect are peculiar, and merit notice. They profess that there is one God, and Mahomed is his prophet: but as the Supreme Being neither has nor can have any participator in his power, they say, that to profess that either Mahomed, the Imaums, or any saints, can have any superintendance over the affairs of men, or render them any aid hereafter, is blasphemy. They deem Mahomedans who deviate in any way from the plain, literal meaning of the Koran, infidels; and maintain, that to make war upon all such is the imperious duty of every Wâhâbee. It is one of their tenets, that all titles meant to show respect and honour to men are odious

pay this species of devotion at the principal shrines that have been mentioned, but have an immense number of inferior saints and martyrs, at whose tombs they offer up their prayers. Every village in Persia can boast of some shaikh or holy person, whose character has obtained him a local reputation that has rendered his shrine sacred among the few acquainted with his name. CHAP. XXII.

to God, who alone is worthy of high name: and they assert, that in conformity to what is revealed in the Koran, true Mahomedans should wage continual war against unbelievers, till they are converted, or agree to pay the tribute imposed on infidels; and that in the latter case they should be compelled to wear the coarsest garments, not be allowed to ride on horses, nor to live in splendid dwellings. They maintain, that the taxes (including zukaat and khums) levied by Mahomed are alone lawful: that swearing by Mahomed or Aly, or any person, should be prohibited, since an oath is calling a witness to our secret thoughts, which no one can know but God. They deem it a species of idolatry to erect magnificent tombs; but to kiss relics, &c. is idolatry itself; *and therefore, they affirm, that it is an action acceptable to God to destroy the tombs of Mahomedan saints in Arabia and Persia, and to appropriate their rich ornaments to worldly purposes, for which they were designed.* They say, that it is wicked to mourn for the dead, for if they were good Mahomedans their souls are in paradise, at which their friends should rejoice. The Wâhâbees reject the whole of the traditions, limiting their belief to the Koran, which was, they say, sent from heaven to Mahomed, who was an excellent man, and much beloved of God. They continue to preserve the usages of circumcision, ablution, &c. which they found established, but consider them more as matters of practice and usage than of faith. The leading principle of this sect is their right to destroy and plunder all who differ from them: and those Mahomedans who do not adopt their creed are represented as far less entitled to mercy than either Jews or Christians. Their progress was so great about ten years ago, as to excite considerable alarm in the Turkish government. Among other places, they plundered the rich tombs of Aly and his sons at Nujuff and Kerbelah. Their inroads are always dreadful, for they spare none who do not conform to their opinions; but they have lately met with some severe checks, and appear to be declining.

CHAP. XXII. The Sheahs observe the same feasts as the Soonees; but the former have set aside the ten first days of the month of Mohurrum to mourn over the cruel fate of Hussein and Hussun, the sons of Aly. On the last days of this feast they beat their breasts with violence; and, calling on the names of the two martyrs, they pour curses on the heads of their enemies. It is during this ceremony that the lower order of the Sheahs give offence to the Soonees, by publicly cursing the three first caliphs, and particularly Omar. The Sheahs also observe a feast* on the day upon which, according to their traditions, Mahomed named Aly his successor; an occurrence which the Soonees deny.

It has been before stated, that the Persians refuse their assent to many of the traditions admitted by the Soonees; and the latter also reject many which their opponents deem authentic, as these traditions not only relate to the faith, but the form of prayer, and to the usages and laws of those who believe in them. There are several points of practice, both in religious worship and civil usages, in which these sects differ widely from each other. They neither agree in the manner of performing their ablutions, nor in the mode of holding their hands when at prayer. They also differ in the law of divorce: and the Persians admit a legal concubinage, by which the parties are united for a limited period; a practice that is deemed, by the Soonees, a great profanation of the divine law. It would, however, be endless to describe the minute differences which exist between

* The Persians also observe the twentieth of Suffer in commemoration of the burial of the Imaum Hussein's head at Kerbelah. It had been cut off when he was slain, and carried to Moâveah at Damascus; but was brought back to Kerbelah, and buried, forty days after the death of the Imaum.

these two sects. All those that are essential have been noticed; and more is not necessary to convey a full idea of their opposite and irreconcileable nature. CHAP. XXII.

It has already been observed, that the establishment of the Sheah faith as the national religion of Persia, gave to a country, in which patriotism was unknown, a principle of union, of equal, if not greater force. The Persians, however, are not so violent at present as they once were in their religious prejudices*: they deem their Soonee neighbours as lost in error, but they do not term them infidels. "They "are believers†," they say, "because they recognise the holy mission "of Mahomed, and worship God; but they have forfeited their "claim," they add, "to be denominated faithful‡, by their adoption "of those who refused allegiance, and acted with cruelty towards the "nephew, the daughter, and the lineal descendants, of the holy pro-"phet." The Soonees are not so charitable in their sentiments of the Sheah sect: and though some of their ablest divines‖ have declared that the Sheahs, though deluded, were still Mahomedans, almost all Soonee monarchs have been led, by a mixture of religious and political motives, to treat them as a race of heretics that were worse than infidels; and, upon this ground, the most pious of the rulers of Bokharah § have considered themselves entitled to make

* This change is not to be ascribed, as has been supposed, to the progress of civilisation, but to the decrease of that fervor which attended the first introduction of the Sheah faith as the national religion of Persia.

† The term Moslem signifies believer. ‡ Mouemen signifies faithful.

‖ According to a writer who has been before quoted, Ul Ghazali, Shaikh Ashâree, and several other celebrated Soonee doctors of law, have declared, that the Sheahs should not be considered as infidels.—*MS. Letter of* Moollah Mahomed.

§ It has been before shown, that the bigoted Beggee Jân, ruler of Bokharah, did

CHAP. XXII.

slaves of their Sheah prisoners: an act that would be impious, if these were deemed Mahomedans. The blasphemous tenets of the sect of Ali-ilahyahs *, or those who deem Aly to be a divinity †, have been attributed, by their enemies, to the Sheahs, who entertain a just abhorrence of the principles of this sect, whose numbers are not great, and who endeavour to conceal their usages, (some of which are said to be of an obscene nature,) under a veil of mystery.

An account of the Sooffees.

In a chapter upon the religion of Persia it is impossible to pass over the Sooffees. That extraordinary class of devotees have been before noticed; but they claim a fuller description. We discover, from the evidence of Mahomedan authors, that these enthusiasts were co-existent with their religion. Their rapturous zeal, perhaps, aided in no slight degree its first establishment; but they have since been considered among the most dangerous of its enemies. There can be no doubt that their free opinions regarding its dogmas, their contempt of its forms, and their claim to a distinct communion with the

not hesitate to make his Sheah captives slaves; and he is reproached by Aga Mahomed Khan with allowing true believers to be sold like beasts in the market-place of his capital. The savage Turkoman tribes, who made inroads into that country, followed the example of this prince, but from very different motives than those of religion. I one day asked a man of these tribes on what ground they made their Persian captives slaves? "Because," said he, "they are heretic Sheahs."—"But suppose," I added, "those you took were Soonees."—"Then," replied he very coolly, "we must turn "Sheahs, for slaves we must have."

* For a description of this sect, see Mr. H. T. Colebrooke's Paper on the Origin and peculiar Tenets of certain Mahomedan Sects.—*Asiatic Researches,* Vol. VII. page 339.

† The accurate and learned Sale, in his Preliminary Discourse to his Translation of the Koran, has partly fallen into this error, and unjustly charges the Sheahs with considering Aly as equal, if not superior, to Mahomed.

Deity, are all calculated to subvert that belief for which they outwardly profess their respect; and their progress has, consequently, been deemed as synonimous with that of infidelity. There is no country over which the tenets of the Sooffees have, at different periods, been more widely diffused than Persia. The great reputation acquired by one of their priests, enabled his descendants to occupy the throne of that kingdom for more than two centuries*: but the monarchs of the Suffavean dynasty were too sensible of the aid which their power derived from the continuance of an established and understood religion, to indulge in the rapt and visionary dreams of their pious ancestors. Their country, however, continued to abound with persons who believed in the tenets which these had taught; and the increase of their numbers has been, of late years, so great in Persia, that the Mahomedan divines of that nation have called upon the reigning king to defend the true faith from the attacks of several popular teachers; who, from the sanctity of their lives, and the delusive character of their doctrines, had acquired an alarming popularity. The monarch has, in consequence, adopted the most rigorous proceedings; and his severity has, for the moment, repressed a flame, which it would appear more calculated to increase than to extinguish.

It would be vain to attempt to give a full history of the Sooffee doctrine; traces of which exist, in some shape or other, in every region of the world. It is to be found in the most splendid theories of the ancient schools of Greece, and in those of the modern philosophers of Europe. It is the dream of the most ignorant, and of the

* Ismail the First ascended the throne of Persia in A. D. 1500, and his family was subverted by Nâdir Shah, A. D. 1736.

CHAP. XXII. most learned; and is seen at one time indulging in the shade of ease, and at another traversing the pathless desert. It every where professes to be adverse to error and superstition, but exists by the active propagation of both. The wild and varied doctrines of their teachers are offered to the disciples of this sect, in the place of the forms and usages of their religion. They are invited to embark on the sea of doubt, under the guidance of a sacred teacher, whom they are required to deem superior to all other mortals, and worthy of a holy confidence that borders upon adoration. It is in India, beyond all other climes, that this delusive and visionary doctrine has most flourished. There is, in the habits* of that nation, and in the character of the Hindoo religion, what peculiarly cherishes that mysterious spirit of holy abstraction in which it is founded: and we may grant our belief to the conjecture which assumes, that India is the source from whence other nations have derived this mystic worship of the Divinity.

The general name which the Persian followers of this sect have adopted, is Sooffee†; a term which implies pure: and by this all

* The same remark is applied by our ecclesiastical writers to Egypt; to which country they trace the mystic, the hermit, and the monk. These writers speak of the propensity to an austere life as a disease in Syria and Egypt.

† The Arabic term Sooffee, which means "wise, pious," and metaphorically used to denote a religious man, is supposed to be derived from the term *Saaf*, "pure, clean;" or *Suffü*, which signifies "purity." Some have traced it to *Soof*, "wool," or "wool-"bearing," in allusion to the coarse woollen garments usually worn by its teachers. It is worthy of remark, however, that these terms are all from the Arabic, and that the accounts we have of the Sooffees are comparatively of a modern date, being all subsequent to the conquest of Persia by the Caliph Omar. It is not very unlikely, therefore, that this name has been originally adopted from the Greek term Σοφοι (Sophoi), wise men.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

ranks who adopt this creed are known, from the revered teacher, who is followed by thousands of disciples, to the humblest derveish, or fakeer, who travels about naked, and begs alms to support him in that life of prayer which he has voluntarily adopted *.

The Sooffees represent themselves as entirely devoted to the search of truth, and as incessantly occupied in the adoration of the Almighty, an union with whom they desire with all the ardour of divine love. The great Creator is, according to their belief, diffused over all his creation †. He exists every where, and in every thing.

* A life of mendicity, which many adopt from motives of piety, is assumed by others, whose fortunes are desperate, as a means of livelihood. It is related, that a man came to Mahomed, and exclaimed, " O prophet! I am poor."—" Poverty is my " glory," replied Mahomed. Another person came afterwards, and used exactly the same phrase: but Mahomed said to him, " Poverty causes men to blush in both " worlds. You wonder," said the prophet to his companions, " at the apparent incon- " sistency of my answers to two men seemingly of the same condition: but the first " of these men is virtuous, and has, from principle, abandoned the world; but the se- " cond fellow has no such merit, the world has abandoned him."—*Mujalis-ul-Moumenan.*

† It is difficult to understand what the Sooffees state to be their opinion regarding matter. Some of these term the world *alum kheal*, i. e. " a world of delusion;" by which it is implied, that we are constantly, with regard to all *maddah*, or " matter," under an illusion of our senses, and that it exists only from the light of God, or the animating principle which enables us to see it, and makes it visible, otherwise it is in itself nothing. " The creation," they say, " proceeded at once from the splendour of God, " who poured his spirit on the universe as the general diffusion of light is poured over " the earth by the rising sun; and as the absence of that luminary creates total dark- " ness, so the partial or the total absence of the divine splendour, or light, causes par- " tial or general annihilation." They compare all the creation, in its relation to the Creator, to those small particles that are discernible to the eye in the rays of the sun, which are gone the moment that planet ceases to shine. — *Persian MS.*

CHAP. XXII. They compare the emanations of his divine essence, or spirit, to the rays of the sun; which are, they conceive, continually darted forth, and reabsorbed. It is for this reabsorption in the divine essence, to which their immortal part belongs, that they continually sigh. They believe that the soul of man, and that the principle of life, which exists throughout all nature, is not from God, but of God; and hence those doctrines which their adversaries have held to be the most profane, as they were calculated to establish a degree of equality of nature between the created and the Creator.

The Sooffee doctrine teaches that there are four stages through which man must pass before he can reach the highest, or that of divine beatitude; when, to use their own language, "his corporeal veil* will "be removed, and his emancipated soul will mix again with the "glorious essence, from which it had been separated, but not divided."

The four stages to their attainment of divine beatitude.

The first of these stages is that of humanity †, which supposes the disciple to live in an obedience to the holy law ‡, and an observance of all the rites, customs, and precepts of the established religion; which are admitted to be useful in regulating the lives, and restraining within proper bounds the vulgar mass, whose souls cannot reach the heights of divine contemplation, and who might be corrupted and misled by that very liberty of faith which tends to enlighten and delight those of superior intellect, or more fervent devotion||. The

* Purdâh Jusmâneâh. — *Persian MS.* † Nâsoot. ‡ The Sherrâh.

|| I have been greatly aided in this part of my subject by a MS. on the Sooffees, which Captain Graham, at Bombay, delivered to a literary society, lately established at that place. There cannot be higher authority than this gentleman, who adds to great learning, a singular knowledge of the opinions and usages of this extraordinary class of oriental devotees.

second stage, in which the disciple attains power, or force *, is termed the road †, or path; and he who arrives at this, leaves that condition in which he is only admitted to admire and follow a teacher, and enters the pale of Sooffeeism. He may now abandon all observance of religious forms and ceremonies, as he exchanges, to use their own phrase, "practical for spiritual worship ‡:" but this stage cannot be obtained without great piety, virtue, and fortitude; for the mind cannot be trusted in the neglect of usages and rites, necessary to restrain it when weak, till it has acquired strength from habits of mental devotion, grounded on a proper knowledge of its own dignity, and of the divine nature of the Almighty. The third stage is that of knowledge ‖; and the disciple who arrives at it is deemed to have attained supernatural knowledge; or, in other words, to be inspired: and he is supposed, when he reaches this state, to be equal to the angels. The fourth and last stage is that which denotes his arrival at truth §; which implies his complete union ¶ with the Divinity.

The Sooffees are divided into innumerable sects, as must be the case in a doctrine which may be termed the belief of the imagination. By enumerating a few of the most remarkable of these sects, the character of the whole will be understood: for though they differ in name, and some minor usages, they are all agreed in the

* Jubroot. † Turreekât.

‡ The term used to express practical worship is Jusmânee Amul, which may be translated "the acts of the body." Spiritual worship is styled Roohânee Amul, or "the acts of the soul."

‖ The Arabic term is Aruf, which signifies "having attained knowledge; scientific."

§ Hukeekât. ¶ This junction is termed Wâsil, which means "joined, united."

CHAP. XXII. principal tenets; and particularly in those which inculcate the absolute necessity of a blind submission to inspired teachers, and the possibility, through fervent piety and enthusiastic devotion, of attaining for the soul, even when the body inhabits the earth, a state of celestial beatitude.

Authors are divided whether there are two or seven of what can be deemed original sects among the Sooffees: but a very learned writer*, whose hostile bigotry made him direct all his ability to explain and confute the doctrines of the Sooffees, after enumerating the seven† that are supposed to be original, states his opinion, that there are but two entitled to that distinction. These are called the Hulooleâh, or "the inspired," and the Itâhedeâh, or "the unionists." He deems the other five sects, which have been considered by many as original, to be only branches from these two. The principle

* Aga Mahomed Aly, the late Mooshtâhed, or high priest, of Kermanshah. I was well acquainted with this learned Persian, who enjoyed, when I was in Persia in 1800, the highest respect and confidence of the king. He was a man of considerable information: and there was nothing in his appearance or manners which indicated that violence and relentless zeal with which he, some years afterwards, persecuted the Sooffees.

† Aga Mahomed Aly observes, that "the Sooffees are divided into a great number "of sects. Some affirm," he states, "that only four are original; the others being no "more than branches from them. The first of these is the Hulooleâh, or 'the inspired "by the Divinity.' The second is the Itâhedeâh, or 'the unionists.' The third is the "Wâsâleâh, or 'the joined.' The fourth is Ashakeâh, or 'the lovers.' Some," this author states, "add two more. The fifth they term the Tulkeeneâh, or 'the learned,' "or 'the teachers:' and the sixth are the Zeerukeâh, or 'the penetrating.' Others," he adds, "have mentioned a seventh sect, whom they call Wâhdatteâh, or 'the solitudi-"narians.'" This writer concludes by stating his belief, that there are only two original sects of Sooffees,—those mentioned in the text; and that all the others are derivatives.

maintained by the Hulooleâh, or "the inspired," is, that God has entered or descended into them; and that the Divine Spirit enters into all who are devout and have an intelligent mind. The Itâhedeâh, or "unionists," believe that God is as one with every enlightened being*. They compare the Almighty to flame, and their souls to charcoal; and say, that in the same manner that charcoal when it meets flame becomes flame, their immortal part, from its union with God, becomes God. It has, the learned author here followed states, been affirmed†, that these two sects, which are now deemed original, are derived from a sect called Hermâneâh, who borrowed their tenets from the Sâbetteâh, or "ancient Sabians." "Impious men," he observes, "desiring to conceal from themselves "the great error into which they had fallen, have tried to connect "the doctrines of these sects with that of the twelve holy Imaums, "to which they have not the slightest affinity: but," he adds, "the "principal tenets of the Hulooleâh certainly approach the creed "of the Nazarenes, who believe that the Spirit of God entered into "the womb of the Virgin Mary, and thence the doctrine of the "divine nature of their prophet, Jesus."

Principles maintained by the Itâhedeâh.

The Wâhdatteâh‡, or "the solitudinarians||," whom this author

* Aga Mahomed Aly's Letter.

† "This is affirmed," Aga Mahomed Aly says, "by the author of the Beân-u-deen, "or 'expounder of religions.'"

‡ I find, in a work written by the late Shânâvâz Khan of Delhi, a very full account of the first peers or saints of the Sooffees. He mentions Abdool *Wâhed*, the son of Zyd, as the founder of a great sect; and it is not improbable that the sect of *Wâhdatteâh* derive their name from him.

|| The Arabic term Wâhed, from which this name is derived, also means singular, unique, incomprehensible.

CHAP. XXII.

An account of the belief of the Wâhdatteâh.

terms a branch of the Itâhedeâh*, are considered, by many other writers, one of the original sects of Sooffees. They believe, that God is in every thing, and that every thing is God. This class of Sooffees are deemed followers of the ancient philosophers of Greece, particularly of Plato, who, they assert, has said, "That the God of the world has "created all things with his own breath†, and every thing, therefore, "is both the Creator and the created." The tenets of the Wâhdatteâh are very prevalent among modern Sooffees; and many sects deem themselves branches of this stock. The author hitherto followed enumerates twenty sects‡ that follow the Wâhdatteâh, each of

* Aga Mahomed Aly states, that "this sect were not known in the time of the "celebrated Sooffee teachers, Bayezeed and Helâj:" but his comment to prove this fact only shows, that the tenets they now openly declare were then held in secret, and were deemed mysteries: for he states, that "Helâj, when he declared himself a god, "was not blamed by them for being blasphemous, but for being a revealer of "secrets."

† The Persian expression used to express breath is *nufs*. It is here necessary to remark, that *nufs*, or breath, as applied to man, is deemed the human part of animation, and quite distinct from Rooh, which signifies, "the soul, or the immortal part."

‡ These are,

1st. The Dheri, or "the eternals," who are described in the text.

2d. The Wâssâleâh, or "those who have mixed or joined with God."

3d. The Hubbeebeâh, or "the friends," who claim, from having attained the friendship of God, exemption from all the forms observed by other men.

4th. The Wulleeâh, or "the holy favourites," who are described in the text.

5th. The Mushârukeâh, (also called Afzuleâh,) or "the companions."

6th. The Shemrâkeâh, which means, in one sense, "liberal;" in another, "a "cluster of dates." They are supposed to be derived from the Khârijâh, or "the separatists." This sect are accused of being great sensualists.

7th. The Mâhâbeâh, or "the revered." This sect are said to maintain the doctrine of the community of property and of women.

whom has some difference in the subordinate parts of their belief and their usages. Among the most remarkable of these are the Dheri, or "eternals," who believe the world is uncreated and indissoluble; and conceive that man is taught his duty by a mysterious order of priesthood, whose numbers and ranks are fixed, and who rise in gradation from the lowest paths to the sublimest CHAP. XXII.

8th. The Mullâmetteâh, or "the reproached." *Aga Mahomed Aly* observes, when speaking of this sect, "Many Sooffees maintain the doctrine of necessity, which "confounds all virtue and vice: but this sect proceed further, and give a preference to "what the world call vice; and hence their name of "the reproached." But it is probable that this name is only given to them by their enemies.

9th. The Hâleâh, or "persons in a proper state;" or, as it might be translated, "the good state." This sect maintain, that the clapping of hands, dancing, and singing, to which they are accustomed, are involuntary. They affirm, that when they are in these fits, God comes to them and tells them secrets. "They lay their heads" (they say,) "in his bosom, and he lays his head on theirs. It is the stirring of the divine nature," (they assert,) "which leads to their dancing, and to all their extravagant joy."

10th. The Houreâh; so called, because they assert, that when they dance till they fall down insensible, they enjoy the society of the houries, or nymphs of paradise; and these delightful mistresses, they say, tell them of mysteries.

11th. The Wâkuffeâh, or "the knowing;" so called, from asserting, that none but themselves know God. Reason, they say, can never lead to that knowledge: it must be attained through the aid of a holy teacher.

12th. The Tusleemâh, or "the obedient;" a name given from their profession of a blind and devoted obedience to the commands (whatever they may be,) of their teacher. When these are proved faithful, they receive a small chain, or string, called the Reshtâh Tusleem, or "the string of obedience," from their teacher. Aga Mahomed Aly states, "that the sects of Ursulleâh and Kullundereâh have a similar usage."

13th. The Tulkeeneâh, or the Nezereâh; that is, "the teachers, or the observers." They maintain, that to read any book, except one written by a Sooffee, is unlawful: but even from these books nothing can be learnt without the aid of a holy teacher:

CHAP. XXII. height of divine knowledge. The Wulleeâh, or " holy favourites," whose teachers claim a share in the attributes of the Almighty, and assert, that they have power to raise the dead, or to kill the living; and who, pretending to imitate that God of whom they declare themselves a part, have neither wife nor dwelling. The Mushârukeâh, or " friends," who assert, that they are greater than the prophet, because they hold direct communion with God.

but such, when initiated, can, they say, learn the disciple more in one hour, than a moollah could in seventy years. Faith, this sect say, is *not created;* which, in one meaning, signifies " *faith is God.*" The followers of this sect are generally dressed in khirkâs, or " patched garments," and wear a felt cap. They contemn worldly knowledge, and pretend to mysteries, in which they are instructed by a preparatory fast, during which they hardly taste food, and are kept in complete solitude.

14th. The Kummâleâh, or " the perfect," who are described in the text.

15th. The Khâmeâh, or " the inspired," who are described by Aga Mahomed as a sect of Epicureans, who seek nothing but the enjoyment of the present hour, and who are said not even to believe in a future state.

16th. The Nooreân, or " the enlightened ;" so termed, from their professed attachment to Noor, which signifies " light, or virtue," and their horror at Nâr, which signifies " fire," and is, with them, the symbol of vice.

17th. The Bâtteneâh, or " the mysterious." This sect, Aga Mahomed states, deem madmen holy, and term them " the abstracted."

18th. The Joudeâh, or " the thirsty." This sect are accused of delighting in fables and allegories, of wearing silk and embroidered garments, and of indulging in sensual gratification.

19th. The Ashakeâh, or " the lovers." The severe writer, who gives this account of the sects of Sooffees, says, that " the Ashakeâh profess themselves ardent lovers of " God: but they continually address," he adds, " the fairest part of the Almighty's " creation with a favourite sentence, which implies, *that worldly love is the bridge over* " *which those must pass who seek the joys of divine love.*"

20th. The Jumkhooreâh, or " the collected," are described in the text.

The Hâleâh, or those that have reached "the good state," who are distinguished by their singing and clapping of hands, and by their falling into occasional trances, in which they pretend to visitations from the Almighty. The Kummâleâh, or "the perfect," who reject all worldly occupation, except singing, dancing, and music; or, to use their own words, "those pursuits in which the soul takes delight." "This sect," the author who describes them observes, "even sing "their prayers." The Noorean, or "the enlightened," who teach, that men's actions should neither proceed from the fear of punishment nor the hope of reward, but from innate love of virtue, and a detestation of vice. The twentieth and last branch of the Wâhdatteâh is denominated Jumkhooreâh*, which means, "the collected;" a name that has been given them from their belief in the collected creeds of all the other sects of Sooffees. Their leading doctrine is, that nothing which exists should be rejected, for all things contain a portion of the Divinity. They are accused of being complete optimists: every thing is good with them: religion and infidelity; the lawful and unlawful. "Like the Nazarenes," the author who gives this account observes, "they deem dogs and hogs clean animals; and, like them, they "admit that females may go about unveiled. The greater part of "the modern Sooffees†," he affirms, "belong to this sect; and they

* Jumkhooreâh, considered as a compound word, may be translated "the collected;" but the term jumkhoor signifies "hollow" (as a reed). If their name has this signification, it must have been given by their enemies.

† Aga Mahomed Aly states, that "there is another branch called Zerâkeâh, who "have formed a creed, like the Jumkhooreâh, from the adoption of almost all the pre-"ceding sects of Sooffees."

CHAP. XXII.

"dignify their indiscriminate principle of belief and of conduct "with the exalted name of divine love."

They declare their prophet, Mahomed, to have been a Sooffee.

The Mahomedan Sooffees have endeavoured to connect their mystic faith with the doctrine of their prophet, who was himself, they assert, an accomplished Sooffee; and they interpret * many of the verses in the Koran, and some of his traditionary sayings, in a manner calculated to give them the benefit of his great name. The Persian followers of this sect deem Aly, his sons, and all the twelve Imaums, as teachers of Sooffeeism. They state, that Aly deputed his two sons and two other holy men to teach the mysteries of this faith; and from these many of the principal Khâlifâs, or teachers, who have founded sects, derive their title to the sacred mantle †, which was the symbol of their spiritual power.

* They quote a tradition of the prophet, from which they state that their four stages to attain perfection are derived. Mahomed is asserted, in this tradition, to have said, "That the law (canonical) is as a vessel; the road or path is as the sea; "knowledge of divine things is as the shell; and knowledge of the Divinity is as the "pearl: but he who desires to obtain the pearl, must first embark in the vessel."— Captain GRAHAM's *MS. on the Sooffees.*

† It appears, that though the khirkâ or mantle was in general only transferred to a beloved pupil, at the death of his master, some superior saints were deemed possessed of a power, even while living, to invest others with this sacred and mysterious garment. Shahnâvâz Khan informs us, in his Essay (the Moorut Aftâb Namah) upon this sect, that four persons were empowered by Aly to disseminate the doctrines of the Sooffees. These were his two sons, the Imaums Hussein and Hussun, and two learned men, one named Hussein, of Bussorah, and another Kummyl, the son of Zeât. Hussein, of Bussorah, he adds, was succeeded by Abdool Wâhed, the son of Zyd, and Hubbeeb-e-Ajumee, or Hubbeeb of Persia. The following five sects of fakeers, according to this writer, are derived from Abdool-Wâhed.

Attainment of the dignity of Khâlifâ.

The dignity of Khâlifâ can only be attained by long fasting and prayer, and by complete abstraction from all worldly pursuits. The man must die before the saint can be born. The preparation for the third class of Sooffeeism, which elevates to the rank and

1st. The Zydeân, who devote themselves to remain in deserts, and never enter towns or villages. They live entirely on vegetables and roots, holding the slaughter of any animal that hath life to be unlawful.

2d. The Albâzeân take their name from Albâz, a Khâlifâ or teacher, who was invested with the mantle by Abdool Wâhed. They affect solitude, and have neither wives nor children. They profess not to solicit alms, but to spend freely what comes unsolicited.

3d. The Adhumeân trace to the famous Sultan Ibrahim Adhum, who resigned the royal dignity to become a mendicant. They are always travelling, and are companionless. This sect continually move their lips in devotion.

4th. The Bâhâreeân, from Bâhâree, of Bussorah, who derives his mantle through two descents from Sultan Ibrahim Adhum. This sect are very reserved, and practise abstinence.

5th. The Khaujah Isaak. Their Khâlifâ was Khaujah Ulloo, of Deenawar, who derives his mantle, through two descents, from Bâhâree, of Bussorah. Their teacher avoided cities. He is said to have been of a very amorous disposition.

According to Shahnâvâz Khan, nine remarkable sects derive their origin from Hubbeeb-Ajumee.

1st. The Ajumeeân take their name from their founder. They chiefly dwell in mountains, are very abstemious, and wear no dress but what is barely sufficient to cover their nakedness. This sect attach themselves to animals and birds, with which they form friendships.

2d. The Tyfooreân take their name from Bayezeed of Bustâm, one of whose names was Tyfoor-Bayezeed. He was one of the most celebrated of the Sooffees of Persia, and derived his mantle from Hubeeb-Ajumee.

3d. The Kirkeeân derive their name from Mâroof, of Kirkee, who, this author states, was a favoured disciple of the Imaum Rezâ, to whom he is said, in another MS.,

CHAP. XXII. knowledge of angels, requires a long and awful probation. Great numbers perish in their efforts to reach it. The person who makes the attempt must be a holy mooreed or disciple, who, by devotion and abstraction, has already made a progress that has placed him above the necessity of the common usages and forms of established religion. He must commence his endeavour to attain a state of higher beatitude by a long fast, which some sects conceive should not be

to have been a porter. Some of the most celebrated of the modern teachers pretend to derive their authority from this saint.

4th. The Sâkettee[4] derive their name from Seree Sâket, who was a disciple of Mâroof.

5th. Junydeân take their name from Shaikh Junyd of Bagdad, a Khâlifâ or teacher of celebrity, who received his mantle from Seree Sâket.

6th. Kazerooneân. This sect has its name from Aboo Isaak, of Kazeroon, who derives his mantle, through two descents, from Shaik Junyd.

7th. Tooseeân take their name from Allah-u-deen, of Toos, who, after five intermediate gradations or descents, (the term in the original is *Punj-Wâsâttâh,)* inherited the mantle of Shaikh Junyd.

8th. Sohrâverdeeâns, who take their name from Aboo Nujub of Sohrâverdee, who, through five descents, derived his mantle from Hubbeeb-e-Ajumee.

9th. Ferdosiân, who take their name from Nijum-u-deen Ferdosi, who was the Khâlifâ or teacher of Aboo-Nujub of Sohrâverdee.

The same author gives a long list of other sects derivative from the above; and it is remarkable, that the Khâlifâs, or holy teachers, of every one of these sects, either have, or pretend to have, a hereditary right to their mantle from some holy saint: among these he mentions a sect of fakeers called the Suffaveans, who trace themselves to Shaik Suffee-u-deen[5] of Ardebil, who, he observes, derived his mantle, through some gradations, from the Shaikh Junyd of Bagdad.

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[4] This word means a metal-seller; *saket* signifies metal.

[5] The ancestors of the Suffavean Monarchs of Persia.

less than forty days. During this fast he remains in solitude, and in a contemplative posture; and receives no sustenance but what is deemed barely necessary to prevent the soul taking its flight from its mortal tenement. Upon the patience and fortitude which he displays during this severe test, his character greatly depends: but when the skeleton (for such, after this fast, the disciple always appears) walks forth, he has still many years of trial to endure. He must either wander over deserts, or remain companionless in some frightful solitude, occasionally seeing the Khâlifâ or teacher to whom he is attached: for the chief merit of Sooffees, through all their ranks, is devotion to their spiritual leader. When the Khâlifâ dies he bequeaths his patched garment, which is all his worldly wealth, to the disciple whom he esteems the most worthy to be his successor; and the moment the latter puts on the holy mantle, he is vested with the power of his predecessor.

The Persian Sooffees, though they have borrowed much of their belief and many of their usages from India, have not adopted, as a means of attaining beatitude, those dreadful austerities which are common among the visionary devotees of the Hindoos. Practices so abhorrent to nature required for their support all that influence which ignorance and superstition united could gain over the human mind. The most celebrated of the teachers of the Sooffee tenets in Persia have been men as famed for their knowledge as their devotion. In the list of these, modern Sooffees desire to include every name which has obtained a pre-eminence in the history of their country, or in the world*. They claim, in fact, all who, by their writings or sayings,

* The Mahomedan Sooffees claim the Patriarch Abraham as one of their principal teachers. "That holy man," they say, "turned day into night, and night into day, by "his constant and undivided devotion of the most high God." — *Persian MS.*

CHAP. XXII.

have shown a spirit of philosophy, or a knowledge of the divine nature, which elevated them above the prejudices of the vulgar. But though this claim cannot be maintained, as many of the wisest and ablest men of Persia have been remarkable for their attachment to the forms and dogmas of the established worship, the Sooffees can boast that great numbers, as eminent for their learning as their genius, have adopted their opinions. Among these the most distinguished are poets. The progress of the improvement of the human mind is the same in all nations. The first ray of light that illumines a dark and barbarous age emanates from the poet, and his page long continues to be that which is chiefly, if not solely admired. The natives of Persia are enthusiastically devoted to poetry: the meanest artisan of the principal cities* of that kingdom can read or repeat some of the finest passages from their most admired writers: and even the rude and unlettered soldier leaves his tent, to listen with rapture to the strain of the minstrel who sings a mystic song of divine love, or recites the tale of a battle of his forefathers. The very essence of Soffeeism is poetry. The extravagant raptures of genius expatiating on a subject that can never be exhausted, are deemed holy inspirations by those who believe that the emancipated soul can wander at large in the regions of imagination, and even unite with its Creator. The Musnavi †, which teaches in the sweetest strains

Poetry is the essence of Sooffeeism;

* I was forcibly struck with this fact during my residence in Persia. I found several of my servants well acquainted with the poetry of their country; and when I was at Isfahan in 1800, I was surprised to hear a common tailor, that was at work repairing one of my tents, entertain his companions with repeating some of the finest of the mystical odes of Hafiz.

† This celebrated work was written by Shaikh Jellal-u-deen, usually called the Moollah of Room.

that all nature abounds with a divine* love, that causes even the lowest plant to seek the sublime object of its desire. The works of the celebrated Jâmi, which breathe in every line the most ecstatic rapture. The book of moral lessons of the eloquent Sadi, and the lyric and mystic odes of Hafiz, may be termed the scriptures of the

* Sir William Jones has translated a passage from the Musnavi, which will fully illustrate this observation.

" Hear how yon reed, in sadly-pleasing tales,
" Departed bliss and present wo bewails!
" With me, from native banks untimely torn,
" Love-warbling youths and soft-ey'd virgins mourn.
" O! let the heart, by fatal absence rent,
" Feel what I sing, and bleed when I lament:
" Who roams in exile from his parent bow'r,
" Pants to return, and chides each ling'ring hour.
" My notes, in circles of the grave and gay,
" Have hail'd the rising, cheer'd the closing day:
" Each in my fond affections claim'd a part,
" But none discern'd the secret of my heart.
" What though my strains and sorrows slow combin'd!
" Yet ears are slow, and carnal eyes are blind.
" Free through each mortal form the spirits roll,
" But sighs avail not. Can we see the soul?

" Such notes breath'd gently from yon vocal frame:
" Breath'd, said I? no; 'twas all enliv'ning flame.
" 'Tis love, that fills the reed with warmth divine;
" 'Tis love, that sparkles in the racy wine.
" Me, plaintive wand'rer from my peerless maid,
" The reed has fir'd, and all my soul betray'd.

CHAP. XXII. Sooffees * of Persia. It is to them that they continually refer; and the gravest writers, who have defended their doctrine, take their proofs from the page of these and other poets, whom they deem to have been inspired by their holy theme.

Their tenets involved in mystery.

The Sooffee tenets are, as may be supposed from what has been said, involved in mystery: they commence in doctrines of general piety and virtue, and inculcate forbearance, abstemiousness, and universal benevolence. This is their profession; but they have secrets and mysteries for every gradation, which are never revealed to the profane. Munsoor Helâj, one of the most eminent of their spiritual leaders, who, they believe, had attained the fourth or last stage of Sooffeeism, proclaimed, "I am the truth;" or, in other words, "I am God †." The constant repetition of this impious

"He gives the bane, and he with balsam cures;
"Afflicts, yet sooths; impassions, yet allures.

"Hail, heav'nly love! true source of endless gains!
"Thy balm restores me; and thy skill sustains.
"Oh, more than Galen learn'd, than Plato wise!
"My guide, my law, my joy supreme, arise!
"Love warms this frigid clay with mystic fire,
"And dancing mountains leap with young desire.
"Blest is the soul, that swims in seas of love,
"And long the life sustain'd by food above.
"With forms imperfect can perfection dwell?
"Here pause, my song; and thou, vain world, farewell."

Sir William Jones's *Works*, Vol. I. p. 458.

* The names of Sàhibi, Oorfee, Rudiki, and many others, might be added.

† Many fables have been invented to account for the imprudence of this wise teacher. One of these states, that he observed his sister go out every evening: he

phrase alarmed the bigotry of the orthodox priests, and he was seized and impaled. An inspired Sooffee is said to have demanded of the Almighty why he permitted Munsoor to suffer? The reply was, "This is the punishment of the revealer of secrets *." Among the many fables they relate of this holy person, is one that marks distinctly the manner in which they desire to reconcile their doctrines with the faith of Mahomed. When Munsoor Helâj was carried to the stake, the executioners, they observe, could not perform their duty: it was in vain they endeavoured to seize him; his body eluded their grasp, and appeared seated in a composed posture in the air, at some distance from the stake †. While this was occurring upon earth, his soul sought the regions of paradise. He was accosted by Mahomed, who admitted that he had arrived at the stage of Wâssilâh, or "union," and that his saying he was God was truth: but he entreated him, for the sake of practical religion, which was necessary to keep men within proper limits, to permit himself to be impaled. The soul of the holy man, convinced of the justice of what the prophet had said, returned to earth, to reanimate his body, which endured the death to which he had been sentenced.

Their desire to reconcile their doctrines with the faith of Mahomed.

The principal fables of the Sooffees relate to those of their sect who have suffered martyrdom. Of these, one of the most celebrated is Shems Tubreezee, who was sentenced to be flead alive ‡, on

Their belief in fables.

followed her, and having seen her communicate with the houries, and receive from these celestial nymphs a cup of nectar, he insisted upon drinking one or two drops that remained of this celestial liquor. His sister told him he could not contain it, and that it would cause his death. He persisted; and from the moment that he swallowed it he kept exclaiming, *An-ool-huk!* that is, "I am the truth!" till he was put to death.

* Persian MS. † Captain Graham's MS. ‡ Ibid.

CHAP. XXII. account of his having raised a person that was dead to life. We are told, that after the law had been put in force, he wandered about, carrying his own skin, and solicited some food to appease his hunger: but he had been excommunicated as well as flead, and no one would give him the slightest help. After four days he found a dead ox, but his efforts to obtain fire to dress it were unsuccessful. Wearied out with the unkindness of men, he directed the sun to broil his meat. It descended, to perform the office; and the world was upon the point of being consumed, when the holy Shaikh commanded the flaming orb to resume its station in the heavens*. The general belief of these monstrous fables, relative to the divine nature of their spiritual leaders, is a just subject of reproach against the whole of the Sooffees; who are also accused by orthodox Mahomedans of having no fixed faith, but of professing a respect which they do not feel for religion, that they may smooth the path of those whom they desire to delude. They pretend, their enemies state, to revere the prophet and the Imaums, yet conceive themselves above the forms and usages which these holy personages not only observed, but deemed of divine institution.

In predestination.

Though the belief of predestination appears to be inculcated by the Koran, few of the orthodox among the Mahomedans give a literal construction to the words of their prophet upon this subject. They deem it, indeed, profane to do so, as it would make God the author of the guilt of man: but almost all the Sooffees are predestinarians. They believe, that the emanating principle, proceeding from God, can do nothing without his will, and can refrain from

* Captain Graham's MS.

nothing that he wills. Some of them deny the existence of evil, because they say every thing proceeds from God, and therefore must be good. The Sooffees of this class exclaim with the poet, "The "writer of our destiny is a fair writer, and never wrote that which "was bad." While those who admit that there is evil in this world, but contend that man is not a free agent, repeat from Hafiz, "My destiny has been thrown into a tavern* by the Almighty. "In this case, tell me, O teacher! where is my crime?"

The Sooffees, we are told by one of the most violent and able of their enemies, deem every thing in the world a type of the beauty and power of the Divinity: but he adds, that it appears from both their actions and writings, that it is in the red cheeks of beautiful damsels that they contemplate his beauty; and in the impious daring of Nimrod and of Pharaoh, that they see and admire the omnipotence of his power. A celebrated Sooffee teacher †, he observes, has written, "That the secret of the soul was first revealed when "Pharaoh declared himself a god:" and another ‡ has said, "The "host of Pharaoh were not lost in the sea of error, but of know-"ledge:" and this writer has asserted in the same page, "That the "Nazarenes are not infidels because they deem Jesus a God, but "because they deemed him alone a God." The Sooffees are stated by the author ‖ so often quoted, to deny the doctrine of reward and punishment; which is, he observes, as incompatible with their ideas of the reabsorption of the soul in the divine essence, as with their

They deny the doctrine of reward and punishment.

* Tavern is undoubtedly used here to signify the sinful world.

† Sahel-ebn-Abdûllâh, of Shuster.

‡ Shaikh Mohee-u-deen. This assertion is to be found in the work of this great Sooffee teacher.

‖ Aga Mahomed Aly.

CHAP. XXII.

literal belief of predestination. But they do not admit the truth of this assertion: and some of their most celebrated teachers, who have revolted at a literal interpretation of the Koran, have maintained, that sinners will be punished, and that the good will enjoy a higher and purer bliss than can be found in a sensual paradise. While others, more visionary, believe that the imagination will have as great a power in the other world as in this, and that the punishment of hell will consist in a delusion. Men, they say, will see a fire, which they will conceive is to burn them; but which, when it reaches them, will prove cold. One of the writers* of this sect goes so far as to assert, that those condemned to hell, will soon, from the habit of living there, not only be reconciled to its heat, but deem it a blessing, and look with disgust on the enjoyments of paradise †.

Their conception of hell.

The Sooffees are accused of seeking to delude the Persians into a belief of their tenets by the most extravagant praises of their favourite Aly; who, according to them, was acquainted with all the mysteries of their doctrine ‡: but they are, he affirms, equal admirers of the three first caliphs when with Soonees, on the same

* Kysuree.

† This author, according to Aga Mahomed Aly, says, that a sinner in hell will, in a short time, be like a beetle in the midst of dung, which, delighted with its unclean mansion, abhors all sweet scents.

‡ The poet Jellal-u-deen makes Aly, when he is wounded by an assassin, declare, "I "am the lord of the country, but with my body I have no concern. You have not struck "me; you are a mere instrument of Providence; and who shall pretend to revenge him- "self on Providence? Be not grieved, therefore, at what you have done, for to-morrow "I am your advocate!" Aga Mahomed Aly, after making this quotation, asks, "To "what does such doctrine lead? To the most infamous sinners attaining the reward "of the just in paradise."

principle that they pretend to be in raptures with Aly when with Sheahs: but the fact is, he adds, " they are in general complete " unbelievers; and it is easy for men to conform to every faith who " believe in none*." In the account which he gives of the different sects of Sooffees, he states a number of facts, calculated to show the extravagant blasphemy of their teachers, and the blind credulity of their followers. " A Sooffee †," he remarks, " has told us, that one " day, when he was intoxicated, he saw God, who was in the figure " of a man, with a coat on, his hair plaited, and his cap cocked on " one side. ' I struck him on the shoulder,' this Sooffee writes, " and exclaimed, ' By the truth of thy unity I know thee; and " if thou assumest a hundred shapes, it will not conceal thee from " my observation!' This is one of those impious madmen," he observes, " whom fools have worshipped as a saint." The spiritual leaders of the Sooffees, the same author states, are not only believed to perform miracles, but to live in continual communion with God; and one of the most celebrated of these teachers, whose life, with all the fables‡ attached to it, is a

Blasphemy of their teachers.

Their belief in the miracles of their teachers.

* Aga Mahomed Aly quotes an Arabic sentence, which is, he states, often repeated by their writers. It literally means, " a Sooffee knows no religion," but they interpret it, " a Sooffee thinks ill of no religion;" or, in other words, from having none themselves, they treat all with equal favour and consideration.—AGA MAHOMED ALY'S *MS.*

† Shaikh Rozabahar Tursee, a teacher of the Wâhdatteâh, or " the Unionists." He is the author of a work entitled the Tufseer-ul-Aserâr, or " Commentary on Mysteries," in which the passage in the text is to be found.

‡ In one of my Persian manuscripts on the Sooffees, is the following curious account of Shaikh Mohyudeen Abdool Kauder, of Ghilan, who was born A. H. 471, and died in 561.

The mother of this saint declared, that when he was at the breast he never tasted milk during the holy month of Ramzan: and Abdool Kauder, in one of his works, gives

CHAP. XXII. favourite theme of this sect, is said to have ascended corporeally to heaven seventy times every night: and the Moollah* of Room,

the following account of himself. "The day before the feast of Araf," he observes, "I "went out to the fields and laid hold of the tail of a cow, which, turning round, ex- "claimed: 'Oh Abdool Kauder, am I not that which thou hast created me?' I "returned home, and went up to the terrace of my house: I saw all the pilgrims "standing at the mountain of Arâfât at Mecca. I went and told my mother that I "must devote myself to God: I wished to proceed to Bagdad to obtain knowledge. "I informed her what I had seen, and she wept: then taking out eighty deenars, she "told me, that as I had a brother, half of that was all my inheritance. She made me "swear, when she gave it me, never to tell a lie; and afterwards bade me farewell, ex- "claiming, 'Go, my son, I give thee to God. We shall not meet again till the day "of judgment!' I went on well," he adds, "till I came near to Hamadan, when our "Kâffilâh was plundered by sixty horsemen. One fellow asked me what I had got? "'Forty deenars,' I said, 'are sewed under my garment.' The fellow laughed, think- "ing, no doubt, I was joking him. 'What have you got?' said another. I gave him "the same answer. When they were dividing the spoil, I was called to an eminence "where their chief stood. 'What property have you, my little fellow?' said he.—'I "have told two of your people already,' I replied; 'I have forty deenars sewed up "carefully in my clothes.' He desired them to be ript open, and found my money. "'And how came you,' said he with surprise, 'to declare so openly what has been so "carefully hidden?'—'Because,' I replied, 'I will not be false to my mother, to "whom I have promised that I will never conceal the truth.'—'Child,' said the robber, "'hast thou such a sense of thy duty to thy mother at thy years; and am I insensible, "at my age, of the duty I owe to my God? Give me thy hand, innocent boy,' he con- "tinued, 'that I may swear repentance upon it.' He did so. His followers were all "alike struck with the scene. 'You have been our leader in guilt,' said they to their "chief, 'be the same in the path of virtue:' and they instantly, at his order, made "restitution of their spoil, and vowed repentance on my hand."

Mohee-u-deen arrived at Bagdad in A. H. 488, and he must consequently have been, when this event happened, sixteen or seventeen years of age. His learning and virtue

* Jellal-u-deen.

whose poems they deem inspired, was, they believe, taken up into heaven when only six years of age. CHAP. XXII.

The learned author* who has been so frequently quoted in the above account of the Sooffees, treats every sect that comes under that denomination with a severity that must detract from the credit which is due to his extensive knowledge of the subject. There is no doubt that many of the most eminent Sooffees have been men of piety and learning, whose self-denial and wisdom have attracted a fame which they did not seek†; while others have clothed themselves in the garb of humility to attain greatness,

are spoken of with rapture. God, according to the author I write from, granted all his requests: and the Divine vengeance fell on those he hated. In A. H. 521 he began his public lectures. High Soonee authorities of the sect of Shaffei report many of his miracles. He himself gives the following account of his fasting, previous to his becoming a disciple of his teacher. "I was eleven years," he observes, "in a *burj*, "(tower,) and when there I declared to God I would not eat or drink till some one "caused me to do so. I remained forty days; after which, a person brought a little "meat, put it before me, and went away: my life was nearly springing out at the "sight of the victuals, but I refrained: and I heard a voice from within me call out, "'I am hungry, I am hungry;' and at that moment Shaikh Abou Syud Mukzoomee "(a celebrated Sooffee,) passed, and, hearing the voice, exclaimed: 'What is that?' "—'It is my mortal part,' I replied; 'but the soul is yet firm, and awaits the result.'— "'Come to my house,' he said; and went away. I resolved, however, to fulfil my "vow, and remained where I was: but Elias came and told me to follow the Syud, "whom I found at his door waiting. 'You would not comply with my wish,' said he, "'till it was enforced by Elias.' After this, he gave me meat and drink in plenty, "and then invested me with a khirkâ, (or sacred mantle,) and I became his confirmed "friend and companion."

* Aga Mahomed Aly.

† The author of the Ayeen Akberry relates, that Wyss Kerânee, a Sooffee who had given up the world, used to say to those that sought him, "Do you seek God? If you

CHAP. XXII. and fled from observation, with no motive but that of attracting it. There is no path to fame and power, however unseemly, and however rugged, into which man will not enter; and the same passions which stimulate the worldly votary of ambition to the attainment of royal robes and a sceptre, fills the breast of the mendicant devotee, who strives for the holy staff and the sacred mantle that are to vest him with power over the minds of the multitude. It has been truly observed, that the greatest objection to Sooffeeism is, that it is in itself no religion: wherever it prevails, it unsettles the existing belief; but it substitutes no other of a defined and intelligible nature. Though it professes to leave the mass of the people in the state in which it found them, it never can. Their minds are taught to consider an attention to all the forms of the religion they follow as a mere worldly duty, from which they are to be emancipated by an increase of knowledge, or of devotion. We can contemplate no attack that is more insidious, or that is more likely to be effectual. It is to praise the beauty and utility of an edifice, that leisure may be given to sap those foundations on which it stands. The Sooffee teacher does not deny the mission of Mahomed: but while he instructs his disciples to consider that prophet and his successors as persons who have been used as instruments for preserving the order and good government of the world, he boasts a direct and familiar intercourse with the Deity; and claims, on that ground, their entire confidence and obedience in all that regards their spiritual interests.

" do, why do you come to me? And if you do not seek God, what business can I have " with you?"

Cauzee Noor-ûllah's account of the Sooffees, and their doctrines

A Persian author*, of very high reputation for his piety and judgment, has given an excellent general account of the Sooffees, and their doctrine. This writer, like many others of equal authority, deem some of the principal Mahomedan saints to have been Sooffees: but, by this term, when applied to them, he obviously means no more than religious enthusiasts; and throughout his observations upon this sect, he makes a wide distinction between those who, though they mortified the flesh, and indulged in an enraptured love of the Divinity, still kept within the pale of revealed religion, and the wild devotee, who, giving himself up to all the errors of a heated imagination, conceived he approached God, by departing from all that was deemed rational among men.

"The Almighty," this author observes, "after his prophets and "holy teachers, esteems none more than the pure Sooffees, because "their desire is, to raise themselves, through divine grace, from this "earthly mansion, to the heavenly regions, and to exchange their "lowly condition for that of angels. What I know of this sect of "men," he continues, "I have stated in my preface†. Those

* Cauzee Noor-ûllah, of Shuster, who wrote the Mujalis-ul-Momineen, (a work upon the Sheah faith,) is deemed one of the most moderate and sensible of Persian authors.

† The following is part of the passage in the preface to which the author alludes:— "The Sooffees are of two classes. Those who desire human knowledge, and the com- "mon usages of religion, and pursue these in the ordinary way, are called Mootâ-kul- "lum, i. e. "advocates," or "observers:" but if they practise austerities, and look to "the inward purity of their souls, they are Sooffees." This word literally means "pure, clean." The celebrated Moollah of Room has the following play upon the word in one of his lines: "*Sooffee nâ shewud sâfee tâ dir nâ râseed jâmee;*" which means,

CHAP. XXII. "among them who are termed accomplished and eloquent are of "two classes, 'men of science*,' and 'men of piety and learning†.' "The first of these seek truth by means of demonstration. The "second, through the proofs afforded by religion. There is another "sect, who are termed 'men of knowledge‡,' and 'holy men||,' who, "in the pursuit of a state of beatitude, have abandoned the world. "This class are also 'men of science;' yet, as they have, through "divine grace, obtained a state of perfection, their fears are believed "to be less than others who remain in worldly occupation§. They "are, consequently, more exalted; and are considered to be nearer "the rich inheritance of the prophets than other men¶. There are, "no doubt," he proceeds to state, "imminent dangers in this "path: for there are many false teachers, and many deceived "students, who, like the thirsty traveller, pursue the vapour of the "desert; and, if they do not rush to death, return wearied, grieved, "and disappointed, because they have been the dupes of their own "imagination. A true and perfect teacher is most rare; and when

literally, "The Sooffee will not be pure till he takes one cup." The meaning of this line is deemed mystical.

* Hookâmâh. † Oulamâh. ‡ Arufâh. || Ouleâh.

§ It is stated, that the disciple of a famous Sooffee, who had some money in his pocket when he was travelling, expressed fear. *Turs-be-andaz*, i. e. "Cast away thy "fear," was the answer of his holy master. "How can I cast away a feeling?" said the man. "By throwing away that for which it is excited," replied the ascetic. The man threw away his money, and, having nothing to lose, felt no more alarm.—*Persian MS.*

¶ This author observes, that "Shaikh Abou-ul-Senna, or Avicenna, has, in the "Mukâmât-ul-Arâfyn, stated all that he has done of this sect."

" he exists, to discover him is impossible; for who shall discover per-" fection, except he that is perfect? who shall tell the price of the " jewel, but the jeweller? This is the reason why so many miss the " true path, and fall into all the mazes of error. They are deceived by " appearances, and waste their lives in the pursuit of that which is " most defective; conceiving, all along, that it is most perfect; and " thus lose both their time, their virtue, and their religion. *It is to* " save men from this danger that God, through the prophet, has " warned us to attend to established usages, and to be guided by " care and prudence. What has been said," this sensible writer observes, " applies equally to those who live in the world, and to them " who have abandoned it; for neither abstinence nor devotion can " exclude the devil, who will seek retired mendicants, clothed in the " garb of divinity; and these, like other men, will discover that real " knowledge is the only talisman by which the dictates of the good " can be distinguished from those of the evil spirit. The traveller " of the path of Sooffeeism must not, therefore, be destitute of " worldly knowledge, otherwise he will be alike exposed to dan-" ger, from excess, or deficiency of zeal; and he will certainly act " contrary to the most sacred of his duties. A senseless man," he continues, " is likely, in the practice of abstinence and abstraction, " to exceed the just bounds; and then both his bodily and mental " frame become affected, and he loses his labour and his object. " It is to men of this description that the prophet adverts, when he " says, ' God will not accept the irrational devotee:' and again, " when he exclaims, ' My back has been broken by pious fools, " and useless learned men.' "

CHAP. XXII.

This writer, after some remarks on the affinity between virtuous Sheahs and Sooffees, observes, "that many of the latter have disguised their real sentiments from their alarm at persecuting tyrants; "and have given general answers, and pretended to be of no particular faith, to escape the effects of that fury which was pointed at "the Sheahs. The consequence of this conduct has been, that they "have subjected themselves to the reproach of having no religion at "all: and, for the reasons I have stated," he adds, "it has become "a tenet among Sooffees not to confess their religion. It is, "indeed, considered among themselves a crime of the deepest turpi-"tude to do so.

"The Sooffee teacher," (according to Cauzee Noor-ûllah,) "professes to instruct his disciple how to restore the inward man "by purifying the spirit, cleansing the heart, enlightening the "head, and anointing the soul: and when all this is done, they "affirm that his desires shall be accomplished, and his depraved "qualities shall be changed into higher attributes*, and he shall "prove and understand the conditions, the revelations, the stages†

* Or qualities: the same word, Ichâlâk, is repeated.

† We are informed by Ferishta, an Indian Mahomedan author of celebrity, that the degrees of the saints of these religious men are four, which he denominates, *sogrâ*, "the least;" *wâsittâh*, "the middle or great;" *kubrâ*, "the greater;" and *uzmâh*, "the greatest." Every Sooffee should attain *diâttee*, "the beginning;" *wâsittâh*, "the middle;" and *nehâittee*, "the end." The holy men of these descriptions in this world are never less, this author adds, than three hundred and fifty-six persons, who are always employed in aiding others and curing souls. The principal Sooffees believe that three hundred of this number are *abtâl*, "erroneous or false;" forty *abdâl*, "pious "men;" seven *asiâh*, "running waters;" five *âutâd*, "props;" three *kutb*, "poles;"

" and gradations of exaltation, till he arrives at the ineffable enjoy-" ment of beholding and contemplating God. If teachers," he continues, " have not arrived at this consummation of perfection " themselves, it is obvious that to seek knowledge or happiness " from them is a waste of time; and the devoted disciple will either " terminate his labours in assuming the same character of im-" posture that he has found in his instructor*, or he will consider " all Sooffees alike, and condemn the whole of this sect of philoso-" phers †. It often happens," he adds, " that sensible and well-" informed men follow a master who, though able, has not arrived at " that state of virtue and sanctity which constitute perfection: his " disciples conceiving that none are better or more holy than their " teacher and themselves, and yet disappointed at not reaching that " state of enjoyment which they expected to arrive at, seek relief

and one *kutb-ul-âctâb*, or " the pole of poles." When any one of these persons dies he is succeeded by another of the rank below him, and so on in regular succession: for instance, if the pole of poles dies, one of the poles fills his place, and so on till one of the people is brought into the rank of *abtâl*, or " erroneous." Among the three hundred and fifty-six persons, the same author adds, nine only are deemed qualified to delegate or invest others with authority as teachers; these nine consist of the *kutb-ul-âctâb*, " the pole of poles;" the three *kutbs*, or " poles;" and five of the *autâd*, or " props;" and those nine alone, he informs us, can be deemed perfect teachers.

* Shaikh is the word generally applied to the principal teachers among the Sooffees, and is always used by this author to describe them.

† Philosoof, which signifies a philosopher, is a word in common use in Persia. It was formerly, they state, applied to Plato and others, who are now known under the more dignified name of Hookâmâh, or " men of science." Impostors in philosophy appear in the East to have degraded the term of *philosoof*, which, in the idiom of the present day, signifies a master in deceit and art.

CHAP. XXII. "from the reproaches of their own mind in scepticism. They "doubt, on the ground of their personal experience, all they have "heard, or read, and believe, that the accounts of the holy men who "have attained in this world a state of beatitude are only a string "of fables. This," our author remarks, "is a dangerous error; and "I must, therefore," he concludes, "repeat, that those who seek "truth should be most careful to commence with prudence and "moderation, lest they be lost in the mazes that I have described; "and, from meeting with evils of their own creation, give way to "disappointment and grief; and, by expelling from their minds that "ardent fervour which belongs to true zeal, disqualify themselves "for the most glorious of all human pursuits."

Rapid progress of Sooffeeism in Persia.

The progress of Sooffeeism has been of late very rapid in Persia. Its tenets were mixed with those of the Sheah sect, when that was established as the national faith by the first of the Suffavean kings; and some of the monarchs of that race gloried in professing tenets which they inherited from their pious ancestor Shaikh Hyder *, who is deemed one of the most celebrated of the Sooffee teachers in Persia. The orthodox hierarchy of Persia have from the first made an open and violent war upon this sect: and though they have often failed in rousing the bigotry of the sovereign in their defence, they have always succeeded in convincing his judgment that the established religion

* Kempfer mentions a book called the Kârâ-jild, or "black volume," which, he says, the Suffavean monarchs inherited from their pious ancestors. This mysterious legacy was not to be opened till the kingdom was in imminent danger of ruin; and it was supposed to contain counsel and prophecies that would be useful on the occurrence of this extremity. I have never met with an account of the Kârâ-jild in any Persian author.

was necessary to the support of the state, and that nothing could be more dangerous than the progress of a spirit of infidelity, which, by unsettling men's minds, was calculated to throw them into a state of doubt and ferment. The principal Sooffee teachers, they admitted, might act from different motives: some might be the deluded dupes of their own imagination, while others sought only to delude their followers: but the tenets and the rhapsodies of all tended to the same point; they desired first to abolish the forms of religion, that they might with more ease destroy the substance; they pretended that in their own contemplation they allowed no name, not even that of the Prophet Mahomed, to come between them and their God; but with the very breath that they uttered this sentence they desired to come between God and all other men. The Sooffee teachers, they said, endeavoured to destroy names to which men gave reverence, with no other object but that of substituting their own: for the first and fundamental tenet of Sooffeeism inculcated, that the profane or erring could not advance a step without a spiritual guide, and that their progress in the true path would be exactly in proportion to their confidence in their holy instructor. What was this, the Mahomedan priests asked, but a desire of becoming the idols * of men's worship; and it could be, they argued, of little consequence to a country, which their bigotry or ambition had thrown into confusion, whether the men by whom this was effected

* The Moortezâ Shahee, who are a sect of Sooffees, make an image of their teacher in clay, which the disciple keeps, to prevent him from wandering, and to bring him, through continual contemplation, to complete identity with his guide or saint.—*Persian MS.*

CHAP. XXII. were desirous of a heavenly or an earthly crown; whether they pulled down the fabric from the mere wish of destroying what they deemed bad, or with the object of building with its ruins something which in their imagination would appear more beautiful. They affirmed, that if they did not seek to excite commotion and rebellion, their doctrines threw the community into a state the most favourable for those who had such designs: and they asserted, that the history of Persia, and neighbouring nations, abounded with examples of their successful efforts to obtain temporal power, through the influence of their spiritual character. Hussun Subah and his descendants were a race of Sooffees*; and the implicit obedience which their devoted followers had given to those mountain chiefs had, for two centuries, filled Persia with murders, and made the proudest monarchs of that country, and neighbouring empires, tremble at the name of their mysterious power. The history of Bayezeed, the founder of the Sooffee sect of Rosheneâh†, or "the enlightened," was, they said, not essentially different from that of Hussun Subah: and Bayezeed had established, amid the mountains of Affghanistan, a temporal power upon the authority of his spiritual character, that enabled him and his successors to disturb the tranquillity of the Empire of Delhi, when that had reached, under the celebrated Ackbar, the very zenith of its power.

* Hussun Subah is said to have belonged to the Sooffee sect of Batteneah. The history of this chief and his descendants has been given, vide Vol. I. page 395.

† For the history of this sect, vide papers of the late Mr. Leyden, Asiatic Researches, Vol. XI.

There was enough of truth in the arguments above stated to awaken all the suspicion of the temporal rulers of Persia; and recent events were calculated to render the government of that country active in their efforts to suppress a heresy of so alarming a character. The Suffavean kings had been taught, by a recollection of their own origin, to be jealous of any of their subjects who appeared disposed to have recourse to the same means: but the Sooffees in their dominions were never actively persecuted before the reign of the last monarch of that race, Shah Sultan Hussein *, who gave himself into the hands of priests of the orthodox religion, and allowed them to exercise every severity towards all who departed from the forms of established worship.

The attempt of Nâdir Shah † to alter the Sheah faith, and to adopt that of the Soonee as the national religion of Persia, and the discussion of sacred topics which that monarch, in the latter years of his reign, invited for the purpose, as he professed, of framing a new faith, had, no doubt, a serious effect in diminishing the influence of the Mahomedan religion upon the minds of the inhabitants of that kingdom. Kurreem Khan, though reputed a true believer, and an observer of the forms of worship, was neither rigid himself, nor intolerant of others. During his reign, a celebrated Sooffee teacher, named Meer Maassoom Aly Shah ‡, came from India to Shiraz, where his followers soon amounted to more than thirty thousand persons. The orthodox priests took alarm, and prevailed upon the mild Kurreem to banish the saint from his capital: but his reputation A. H. 1191.

* Vide Vol. I. page 594. † Vide Vol. II. page 63.

‡ Meer Maassoom is called a disciple of Syud Aly Rezâ, a native of the Deckan.

CHAP. XXII. was increased by the act of power that proclaimed him dangerous. After Kurreem Khan's death, Meer Maassoom, who resided in a A. H. 1195. small village near Isfahan, deputed his first disciple, Fyâz Aly*,

* The author of the life of some of the principal of the modern Sooffee teachers of Persia states, that Fyâz Aly was of the sect of *Noor-Buksheeáh*, or "the Enlightened," who trace their origin to Maroof, of Kirkee; and that he aspired to be the teacher of his sect till Meer Maassoom arrived from India, when he instantly bowed to his superior in knowledge, and was content to become his first disciple. This writer has given us a statement of seventeen tenets, which, he says, are openly professed by this sect. These were as follow:

1st. To adore *nothing* and *no person*, but God.

2d. To attend to the ordinances of the Prophet and the twelve Imaums.

3d. To be always pure by ablution, and to deprecate the wrath of God.

4th. To observe the regular periods of prayer.

5th. To attend to the five lessons decreed to be observed after particular prayers.

6th. To use the *tusbee*, or "string of beads," constantly saying, "O God, thou art "the true and only God; thou alone art pure; I am an unworthy sinner, but thou art "the Forgiver of sinners."

8th. To remember the constant necessity of a moorshed, or teacher, to give strength to devotion, and to give aid in the dark and difficult path.

9th. To welcome every grief and misfortune as a blessing.

10th. To pain neither yourself nor others.

11th. To trace every morning and evening, with the forefingers of your right hand, on your forehead, the name of the true God, of the Prophet, and the twelve Imaums; and on the first of every month, when you see the new moon, to trace the same sacred words on your breast.

12th. To eat what is lawful, and clothe yourself in clean robes; as these outward habits aid inward purity.

13th. Reverence your parents with a reverence like unto devotion.

14th. Preserve the mysteries of your sect as a profound secret.

15th. To let your heart be always with God, wherever your body may be.

to teach in that city. That holy person soon died, and was succeeded in his office by his son, Noor Aly Shah; who, though young in years, was, to use the phrase of his historian, "old in piety." The number and rank of the followers of Meer Maassoom excited alarm in the minds of the priests of Isfahan, who transmitted so exaggerated an account of the vile heresies *, as they were termed, of the Sooffees to Aly Moorâd Khan, and recommended him so strongly to support the faith, by the punishment of those whose opinions were alike hostile to true religion and good government, that the monarch, the moment he received their representation, sent orders to cut off the noses and ears of some of the most zealous of the obnoxious sect; and, as a further disgrace, to shave the beards of all who had adopted their opinions. The ignorant soldiers intrusted with the execution of this mandate, were not very capable of discriminating between true believers and infidels: and we are assured by a cotemporary writer †, that many orthodox Mahomedans had their noses and ears cut off, and their beards shaved, upon this memorable occasion.

A. D. 1782.
A. H. 1197.

16th. To be kind unto all men, to pain none, and to desire to pain none.

17th. To resign yourself to the will of God in all things; never to complain, but to be grateful for every thing.

These, this writer adds, were the seventeen articles of faith to which this sect was, as far as his knowledge went, required to conform. These were the tenets, he says, taught by Fyâz Aly, before the arrival of Meer Maassoom in Persia.

* The writer of the MS. here followed informs us, that men notorious for their profligacy and infamy were employed as spies to discover the doctrine of the Sooffees. These men, he says, reported, that Meer Maassoom was considered as a god by his disciples; and that Noor Aly Shah, Mooshtâk Aly Shah, and others of his favourite disciples, personated the angels Gabriel, Israel, &c. &c.

† Persian MS.

CHAP. XXII. Some of the principal inhabitants of Isfahan*, shocked at these proceedings, interested themselves in favour of the Sooffees, and Aly Moorâd was persuaded to send a second order to stop the persecution he had at first commanded: but Meer Maassoom Aly, and Noor Aly Shah, were not willing to remain where they had been so publicly proscribed; and they proceeded, accompanied by a crowd of followers, to Kerman; where, however, the chief priest, alarmed by the defection of his flock, denounced vengeance against them, and forced Meer Maassoom to fly to Mushed in Khorassan. He was refused admission into that city, and went to Herat, with the desire of proceeding by Cabul to India: but his fame, and the number of his followers, alarmed the King of the Affghans, who compelled him to return to Persia. At Kerman, to which he returned, Mooshtâk Aly, the most pious of his disciples, was put to death. One of the crimes of this person was his excellence as a musician. We are told, that he played upon the târ (a species of guitar with three strings,) in so harmonious and touching a manner, as to melt into tears all who heard him: and, among other accusations, it was alleged that he had, with unpardonable blasphemy, called his guitar a divine instrument!

A. D. 1783. A. H. 1198.

A. D. 1785. A. H. 1200.

A. D. 1789. A. H. 1204.

A. D. 1794. A. H. 1209.

Noor Aly Shah and Meer Maassoom had proceeeded to Kerbelah, and intended, we are informed, to have remained there as a place of safety: but the solicitations of the inhabitants of Kermanshah, where they had before resided, induced them to revisit that city. The numbers that crowded to meet them excited the

A. D. 1797. A. H. 1212.

* Meerza Anâyet-ûllâh Mustoffee is said to have been the person who first undeceived Aly Moorâd Khan, and caused him to stop the persecution of the Sooffees.

jealousy and indignation of the chief priest, who was a man of the highest reputation both for his learning and piety. Alarmed at the rapid progress of infidelity, this pontiff determined to put an instant stop to it by the most violent measures. He placed Noor Aly Shah in confinement; and, during the commotion that followed this act, care was taken that some of the swords of the faithful should slay Meer Maassoom, who was murdered when at prayers in the midst of his followers. The king highly approved of the conduct of the chief priest of Kermanshah, who, in a most able, but violent letter to the prime minister, that was made public, endeavoured, and not without success, to expose the various heresies of the Sooffees, against whom it was the object of his life to direct the popular indignation. This sect, however, notwithstanding the efforts of their enemies to repress them, continued to increase in numbers: and Noor Aly Shah, with all those who adhered to him, were banished the kingdom. He returned some time afterwards, and A. D. 1797. A. H. 1212.
was, we are informed, urged by his followers to create a tumult and murder the tyrannical priest, who appeared determined upon his destruction. The mild spirit of Noor Aly Shah is said to have revolted from this extreme; and he again fled to Kerbelah, from whence he went towards Moossul. His avowed disciples were, at A. D. 1799. A. H. 1214.
this period, about sixty thousand: but many more were supposed to be secretly devoted to him; and among the latter, a great majority were inhabitants of Persia. The danger that was to be apprehended A. D. 1800. A. H. 1215.
from his fame, and the circumstances attending his death*, which

* The writer of his history states, that "two inhabitants of Kermanshah, who were "distinguished by an extraordinary appearance of zeal, dressed the dinner of Noor *Aly* "Shah on the day that he was suddenly attacked by those violent spasms, which, in a

CHAP. XXII. happened at this period, gave reason to suspect that he was poisoned; and from the circumstance of those who were supposed to have perpetrated this act being natives of Kermanshah, his disciples openly ascribed his death to the great opposer of the Sooffees, Aga Mahomed Aly, the mooshtâhed*, or high priest, of that city.

Two of the devoted adherents of this teacher were afterwards taken up and sent in confinement to the reigning monarch, who commanded them to be sent to the high priest of Kermanshah, and empowered that determined enemy of the Sooffees to do what he chose with the offenders: the result was, that they were put to death†.

" few hours, terminated his existence. Their flight led all to suspect them of having " poisoned him. Noor Aly died at nine o'clock on the morning of the tenth of Mohur- " rum, A. H. 1215. He expired," his biographer adds, " close to the grave of the " prophet Jonas, within a league of the City of Moossul."

* Aga Mahomed Aly (who is since dead,) used always to treat this accusation as a malignant calumny. He asserted, that the story of Noor Aly Shah being poisoned was an invention, and that he had died of the plague.

† The letter from Futteh Aly Shah, the reigning monarch, to Aga Mahomed Aly, empowering the latter to put the two Sooffees to death, is a curious document. The following is its purport, as given in the MS. in my possession.

" As the Sooffees have at this time extended their belief to an alarming extent, and " obtained many foolish and credulous converts, who adopt their faith, and dress in " their fashion; as all this is contrary to the interests of the true religion, and has " occasioned much thought to the wisest of our state; as you also have urged us much " on this subject, we have taken the ill into consideration, and have written to all our " governors and officers to punish these offenders if they do not recant; to take from " them all which they have plundered from weak men; and, if the proprietors of this " wealth cannot be found, to distribute it among the poor. We have, in short, ordered,

Some of those who pretend to knowledge upon this subject estimate the numbers of the Sooffees in Persia at between two and three hundred thousand persons: but it is impossible that they can have any means for forming such a calculation; and they probably include in this number, not only those who believe in the visionary doctrines of this sect, but those whose faith in the efficiency of the forms and usages of the established religion has been shaken by the tenets of Sooffee teachers. The latter class are very numerous; and they have probably been increased by the violent means which have been taken to defend the established religion. Every Sooffee that has suffered death is deemed a martyr: and those who revere their memory contend, that the cause of truth could never require to be supported by acts of cruel persecution. The great proportion of the Sooffees of Persia are not to be distinguished from the other part of the Mahomedan population. They are in fact required, when in the first ranks of this mystic faith, to conform to the established religion: and the gradual and unseen manner in which men are led into infidelity, is justly stated, by Mahomedan divines, to be one of the greatest dangers that attend this delusive doctrine.

In the above account of the Sooffees of Persia I have studiously

" that the sect be extirpated and put an end to, in order that the true faith may flourish. " Aga Mehdy and Meerza Mehdy have been deceiving the people about Hamadan, " who consider them as holy teachers: they were sent prisoners to our presence: we " send them by Ashrâff Khan Yessâwul to be delivered over to you, whom we consider " as the wisest, the most learned, and most virtuous of all the oulâmâhs of our king- " dom. Put them to death, confine them, or punish them in the way you deem most " proper and most consonant to the decrees of the holy religion. May your health " and prosperity continue."

CHAP. XXII. limited my observations to the most remarkable facts and events connected with their doctrines and history. To have entered into a minute detail of the opinions of every sect of this class would have been endless: a long catalogue might be given, even from the materials in my possession, of Sooffee saints: but the history of these ephemeral objects of regard and veneration, and a detail of their different tenets, would prove nothing beyond their equal ignorance of the great and inscrutable subject of which they profess a superior knowledge.

I have carefully abstained in this chapter from attempting to give any description of the various and extraordinary shapes which this mystical faith has taken in India, where it has always flourished, and where it has been at times beneficial in uniting the opposite elements* of the Hindoo and Mahomedan faith: nor have I ventured to offer any remarks on the similarity of many of the usages and opinions of the Sooffees of Persia to the Gnostics and other Christian sects, as also to those of some of the ancient philosophers of Greece. The principal Sooffee writers are familiar with the wisdom of Aristotle and of Plato: and their most celebrated works abound in quotations from the latter. It has been often assumed, that the knowledge and philosophy of ancient Greece were borrowed from the East: if they were, the debt has been repaid. The life and opinions of Pythagoras, if translated into Persian, would be read at this moment as that of a Sooffee saint. The tale of his initiation into the mysteries of the Divine nature, his deep contemplation and abstraction of mind, his miracles, his passionate love of music, his mode of teaching his

* This is particularly shown in the life of Nanuc Shah, the founder of the Sikhs; a nation who inhabit the country between the Indus and Delhi.

disciples, the persecution that he suffered, and the manner of his death, present us with nearly an exact parallel to what is related of many of the most eminent of the Sooffee teachers, and may lead to a supposition that there must be something similar in the state of human knowledge and of society where the same causes produce the same effects. CHAP. XXII.

The Christian religion has at no period made any progress in Persia, though that kingdom has been visited by many missionaries. There is, amid the mountains of Kurdistan, a small colony of Nestorians *, who are supposed to have resided there more than thirteen centuries. A Roman Catholic mission has been long established at Isfahan; and the Armenian colony who dwell in one of the suburbs of that capital, though they no longer enjoy the privileges bestowed upon them by Shah Abbas the Great, are still protected in the free exercise of their religion.

The Jews in Persia, who are not numerous, cannot appear in public, much less perform their religious ceremonies, without being treated with scorn and contempt by the Mahomedan inhabitants of that kingdom †. The Guebers ‡, or "worshippers of fire,"

* When I was at Sennah in A. D. 1810, I found a colony of forty families of Nestorians, who had a pastor and a small church. They appeared to live in great comfort, having uniformly, according to their own account, enjoyed the favour and protection of the Walys or Princes of Ardelan. This is chiefly to be ascribed to their peaceable and industrious habits. They were mostly artificers and manufacturers.

† There are numbers of Jewish families at Shiraz, and at Hamadan. This race, who live despised and in poverty in Persia, are not only efficiently protected, but respected in Turkey, where they enjoy both wealth and consideration.

‡ For a description of their religion, vide Vol. I. page 194.

CHAP. XXII. do not experience more toleration, except at Yezd, where they obtain respect on account of their numbers. They have in that city a civil magistrate of their own tribe, who presides over the ward they inhabit; and they observe, in their places of worship, the forms that were established in the reign of Ardisheer Babigan, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

An Account of the Government of Persia; with Observations on the Judicial Revenue and Military Establishments of that Kingdom.

It would be a waste of time to commence the description of the Government of Persia with a discussion upon the nature of that authority upon which orthodox Mahomedans believe the right to govern others should be exercised. From the death of Mahomed, the right of every race of potentates who professed his religion has rested chiefly on the sword; but policy has often led to the sacred name of Imaum, or "vicar of the prophet," being bestowed on those who exercised sovereignty; and we may, perhaps, refer the comparative permanence of some of the greatest of the Mahomedan dynasties * to that increase of respect which they have derived from the union of spiritual and temporal power. None of the various races of kings who have reigned in Persia since the subversion of the authority of the Arabian caliphs, have ever been esteemed the head of the religion of that country. The Suffavean monarchs were revered, and deemed holy †, on account of their descent from a saint; but

* Particularly the Caliphs of Arabia, and the present royal family of Constantinople.

† The sacred regard in which this race of kings were held by their subjects, has been before mentioned. The learned Kœmpfer, who visited Persia in A. D. 1712, has

CHAP. XXIII. they never assumed the chief ecclesiastical power. That power which, according to the belief of the Sheahs, was only legitimately exercised by the prophet, and the twelve Imaums, or descendants of Aly, is considered to belong to Mehdy, the last Imaum, who has disappeared, but who is believed still to exist*. It is exercised, during his concealment, or rather invisibility †, by those holy men who are raised, by popular suffrage, to the dignity of Mooshtâhed ‡, or "high priest;" and who may be deemed at the head of the hierarchy of Persia.

Power of the Monarch of Persia.

The Monarch of Persia has been pronounced one of the most absolute in the world; and it has been shown that there is reason to believe his condition has been the same from the most early ages. The word of the King of Persia has ever been deemed a law; and he has probably never had any further restraint imposed upon the free exercise of his vast authority, than what has arisen from his regard for religion, his respect for established usages, his desire of reputation, and his fear of exciting an opposition that might

given a very curious account of the opinion which the Persians entertained of their sanctity. To give the character of this feeling, it is enough to mention, that the water in which the Suffavean monarch washed was deemed a cure for all complaints.

* This belief of the Sheahs is in direct opposition to the tenets of the Soonees, who maintain that the Imaum should be always visible. They say, that he should neither conceal himself, nor be a common object. — D'Ohsson, page 181.

† The Persian word used is *Ghaib*; which means, "latent, concealed, invisible."

‡ I write from several Persian MSS. of authority, and from the information of several able men of that country, with whom I conversed upon the subject. Chardin states, (Vol. V. page 223,) that the Suffavean kings were deemed the vicars, or "the "successors of the Imaums."

be dangerous to his power, or to his life. There are no assembly * of nobles, no popular representatives, no ecclesiastical council of Oulamâh †, in Persia. It is a maxim in that nation, that the king can do what he chooses, and that he is completely exempt from responsibility. He can appoint and dismiss ministers, judges, and officers of all ranks. He can also seize the property, or take away the life of any of his subjects; and it would be considered as treason to affirm that he was amenable to any checks, except those which may be imposed by his prudence, his wisdom, or his conscience. The exact limitations to which he is subject cannot easily be defined, for they are equally dependant upon his personal disposition, and upon the character and situation of those under his rule; particularly of that part of the community who are, from their condition, the most exempt from the effects of arbitrary power.

The ecclesiastical class, which includes the priests who officiate in the offices of religion, and those who expound the law as laid down in the Koran and the books of traditions, are deemed, by the defence-

* The usages of the Monarchs of Tartary required that they should call a Coroultai, or "assembly of chiefs," upon all great occasions; and when the immediate descendants of these monarchs governed Persia, they probably complied with this custom: but the Coroultai appears to have been assembled less as a deliberative body, than to give force and effect to a measure upon which the prince who presided at it had previously resolved. Nâdir Shah went through the mockery of consulting an assembly of this description before he usurped the crown.— Vide Vol. II. page 62.

† Oulamâh signifies "learned men;" and as the highest kind of *ilm*, or "science," among the Mahomedans, is a knowledge of the Koran and traditions, those skilled in this branch of knowledge are termed Oulamâh; which, in the Turkish empire, describes a body of priests, who, acting under the mufti, or "chief pontiff of the empire," both control and support the power of the grand signior.

CHAP. XXIII. less part of the population, as the principal shield between them and the absolute authority of their monarch. The superiors of this class enjoy a consideration that removes them from those personal apprehensions to which almost all others are subject. The people have a right to appeal to them in all ordinary cases, where there appears an outrage against law and justice, unless when the disturbed state of the country calls for the exercise of military power.

The merchants of Persia are a numerous and wealthy class; and there is no part of the community that has enjoyed, through all the distractions with which that kingdom has been afflicted, and under the worst princes, more security, both in their persons and property. The reason is obvious: their traffic is essential to the revenue: oppression cannot be partially exercised upon them, for the plunder of one would alarm all: confidence would be banished, and trade cease: besides, the merchants of Persia correspond with those of the adjacent countries; and the king who ventured to attack this class, must consent to have his name consigned to disgrace and obloquy in every quarter*.

The citizens of great towns, who have no further protection than what they find in that respect which the absolute monarch of the country is disposed to pay to law and usage, and to the character of their priests and magistrates, are much more exposed to the effects of

* Notwithstanding these claims to favour and protection, contributions, in the shape of loans, have often been raised upon this class: and fines are occasionally levied, on granting or securing to them commercial privileges. In a recent instance, when a case occurred in India, the decision of which materially affected the interests of the Persian merchants, the interference of the court was refused until a sum should be collected, as the price of an application to the English government.

a tyrannical government, than the wandering tribes, who constitute the military part of the community in Persia, and whose condition, in a very great degree, protects them from oppression. These tribes may, in fact, be considered as a camp of soldiers, who are only exposed to the common vicissitudes of the military life, and who are formidable from the character of that social union which causes them to entertain common feelings of attachment and of resentment. The power of the monarch over this class of his subjects may be said to be liable to the same fluctuations as that which he exercises over the principal tributaries of the kingdom, whose submission or disobedience is always determined by the weakness or strength of his authority.

The Kings of Persia are considered as completely absolute in all that relates to their own family. They may employ their sons in the public service, or immure them in a haram; deprive them of sight, or of life, as their inclination or their policy may dictate. It was the practice of the Suffavean kings, after the time of Shah Abbas the Great, to confine the princes of the blood; and those not intended for the succession were usually deprived of sight*, that they might not have it in their power to disturb the peace of the country. The successor to the throne, though fixed upon by the king, was seldom declared till the moment of his elevation: but the rank of the mother was, according to the custom of that family,

* Chardin, Vol. V. page 242, states, that " these princes were deprived of sight at " all ages." He gives a shocking description of the operation of taking out the eyes, which appears to be the same as is now practised. It had been the custom to sear the eyes with a hot iron; but a discovery that this was not effectual, led to the cruel method of taking them out altogether with a sharp pointed instrument.

CHAP.XXIII of no consequence: and the son of a slave (if it suited the pleasure of his royal father,) had as good pretensions to the crown, as the descendant of the highest born princess, who boasted the honour of marriage with the sovereign*. The reigning family of Persia have adopted usages more congenial to the feelings of the military tribe to which they belong. A number of the sons of the present monarch are employed in the chief governments of the kingdom: and a prince, not the eldest of the king's sons, but whose mother is of a high family in the Kujur tribe, has been declared the heir of the crown, and has, for many years, enjoyed a consideration and exercised a charge suited to his high destination. It appears, therefore, that there is no fixed rule for the treatment of the princes of the blood royal in Persia; but in all periods the members of his family have been entirely dependant upon the monarch. Their condition is regulated by his feelings, or his policy: and he is considered by his subjects to have even a more absolute authority over them, than over his domestics, courtiers, and ministers. The sons of the ruler of Persia have in fact no rights that are either recognised by law or by custom. No mediating power can interpose between them and their parent and sovereign. Born on a precipice, they are every moment in danger of destruction, and are alike subject to fall by their virtues as their crimes: for the jealousy of a despot is excessive; and he usually views with increased suspicion and alarm every action of those who are placed nearest to his throne.

From what has been stated, we may assume that the power of the King of Persia is, by usage, absolute over the property and

* Chardin, Vol. V. page 240.

lives of his conquered enemies, his rebellious subjects*, his own family, his ministers; public officers, civil and military; and all the numerous train of his immediate servants and domestics: and that he may punish any person of the above classes without examination or formal procedure of any kind whatever: but in all other cases that are capital, the forms prescribed by law and custom are observed: and the monarch only commands, when the evidence has been examined, and the law declared, that the sentence shall be put in execution, or that the condemned culprit shall be pardoned. There are, no doubt, instances in which the king exceeds that prerogative which usage gives him: but these are rare; and when they occur, it is generally under a pretext that the offence is dangerous to the person or to the power of the king. It is, indeed, obvious, that the hierarchy of the country could not maintain its respect or popularity, if the law, of which it is the organ, was openly contemned and set aside. But we cannot understand the character of the power of the monarch without constant reference to the actual condition of the empire he governs. Persia, in its most tranquil state, contains tributaries, who reluctantly acknowledge his authority, and against whom he is annually compelled to employ his troops; mountain tribes, who subsist by plundering their less warlike neighbours; ambitious nobles, who are eager to establish their independence; and even the more peaceable part of the population have been of late so habituated to change, that they are prompt to obey any new master whom the fortune of the hour places over them. The sovereign of such

* Bands of public robbers are considered in the same light as rebels, and put to death, when seized, without trial.

CHAP. XXIII. a country must be dreaded, or his power could not be effective; and we consequently find, that some of the monarchs of Persia who have been stigmatized by travellers on account of their cruelty, are those under whom that country has been most prosperous. The exaggerated accounts spread of their barbarity has arisen, in a great degree, from the king himself ordering all executions, and from the court of his palace being often the scene of bloodshed. But a practice, at which we shudder, is deemed by the Persians themselves essential to the preservation of the royal power. It adds, they believe, in a very great degree to that impression of terror which it is necessary to make upon the turbulent and refractory classes of the community.

His personal duties.

There is no country in which the monarch has more personal duties * than in Persia: and the mode of performing these, appears to have differed but very little from the most ancient times to the present day. At an early hour in the morning the principal ministers and secretaries attend the king, make reports upon what has occurred, and receive his commands. After this audience, he proceeds to his public levee, which takes place almost every day, and continues about an hour and a half. At this levee, which is attended by the princes, ministers, and the officers of the court, all affairs which are wished to be made public are transacted; rewards are

* There were a few instances among the weakest and most depraved of the Suffavean family, of the reigning monarch confining himself entirely to the palace, and communicating with none except favourite eunuchs: but these remarkable exceptions only prove the general rule by which the Kings of Persia are guided, in the execution of their sovereign functions.

given, punishments commanded; and the king expresses aloud those sentiments of displeasure or approbation which he wishes to be promulgated. When this public levee is over, he adjourns to a council chamber, where one or two hours are given to his personal favourites, and to his ministers. After the morning has been passed in this manner, he retires to his inner apartments; and in the evening he again holds a levee, less public than that of the morning, and transacts business with his ministers and principal officers of state.

The usual occupations of the Monarch of Persia are liable to no interruption but what proceeds from illness, the pursuit of field sports, or occasional exercise on horseback. When in camp, his habits of occupation are the same as in his capital: and we may pronounce, that he is from six to seven hours *every day in public*; during which time he is not only seen by, but accessible to, a great number of persons of all ranks. It is impossible that a monarch, whom custom requires to mix so much with his subjects, can be ignorant of their condition; and this knowledge must, unless his character be very perverse, tend to promote their happiness.

Duties of the prime minister

It is impossible to give an exact description of the duties which the prime minister* of a King of Persia has to perform: these depend upon the degree of favour and confidence he enjoys, and upon the activity and energy, or indolence and incompetency, of his sovereign. He is usually deemed the medium through which political negotiations, and all affairs that relate to the general

* The Persian title of this officer is Hamâd-u-Doulah, which means "the trusted "of the state." He is at present more commonly called Sudder-e-Azim, which means "first in precedence, or prime minister."

welfare of the state, should be transacted. He receives and introduces foreign ambassadors, corresponds with the principal governors of provinces; and when he is a decided favourite he exercises a great influence over all the branches of the government. The prime minister is sometimes placed at the head of every department*; and at others, this great power is divided, and a separate minister has charge of the public revenue †. These arrangements rest solely with the king, upon whose favour the ministers of his court are dependent from hour to hour, not only for the authority they exercise, but for the preservation of their property and their lives, which may be said to be always in peril. Their danger increases with their charge; and their time is incessantly occupied in personal attendance upon their sovereign, in the intricacies of private intrigues, or the toils of public business. Men must be very efficient before they are competent to fill such stations, and they are generally selected on account of the reputation they have attained in inferior offices. It is a maxim of policy not to raise a nobleman of high birth and rank to the station of prime minister. Perhaps few of that class in Persia are equal to the duties: but if they were, it would not be deemed wise to trust men with the use of the king's name, and of the royal seal, who might employ them to further their own plans of ambition, and who could not be cast down without

* The late Hajee Ibrahim, during the whole period that he was prime minister to Aga Mahomed Khan, presided over every department of the state.

† This is the case at present: Meerza Shuffee is prime minister, but Hajee Mahomed Hussun presides over the financial and revenue departments of the kingdom. The title attached to this office was *Ameen-u-Doulah*, or "the safety of the state." He is at present called *Nizam-u-Doulah*, or "the regulator of the state."

exciting a murmur of discontent, if not a spirit of turbulence, among their vassals and adherents. As the administration is in general constituted, the disgrace or execution of a minister creates no sensation whatever. There are instances of a departure from this policy, but they are too rare to be considered otherwise than as exceptions to a general rule.

Duties of the secretaries of state.

Besides his chief ministers, the King of Persia is aided by secretaries of state* in every department: they preside over different offices or chambers of accounts †; and the accounts of the receipts and disbursements of the kingdom, throughout the ecclesiastical, civil, revenue, and military branches, of its government, are kept with much regularity and precision. It is rare, however, that any of the officers who fill these departments enjoy any extensive influence, though it is from this class that the ministers of the crown are often selected.

A great change has taken place in the whole frame of the Court of Persia since the Suffavean kings occupied the throne. Some of the monarchs of that race were accustomed to pass a great part of their time in the haram. The consequence was, that they fell under the dominion of women and of eunuchs. The latter sometimes were promoted to the first stations in the kingdom, and always exercised a commanding influence. The chiefs of warlike tribes, who have, since the downfal of this family, filled the throne of Persia, have not yet changed the manly habits of their ancestors for usages of so

* The Moonshee-ul-Moomâlik, or secretary of state; and the Mustooffees, or counsellors, are among the first in rank: their seal is necessary to every royal mandate.

† These offices are termed Dufter Khânâh, or chambers of records.

CHAP. XXIII. degenerate a character, and eunuchs are very seldom employed beyond the walls of the haram *. The chief officers of the king's household, those who preside over the ceremonies of the court, and his domestics, have not necessarily any official concern with the affairs of government: but as they often, particularly the latter, become great favourites, and enjoy more of the personal confidence of their master than his ministers; they attain, in an indirect manner, a considerable influence, if not authority, in the state.

Law of Persia.

The law of Persia, like that of all Mahomedan nations, is founded upon the Koran and the traditions. From this circumstance, the duties of the priest and the judge are combined; and the hierarchy has attained great power, from the priests being the administrators of the sacred law, and having in that capacity the ability to shield the people, in some degree, from those incessant attacks to which they are exposed from the violence and rapacity of their sovereigns and rulers.

Administration of justice.

Justice is administered in Persia in two distinct modes; regarding which a few observations will be useful, not merely to explain their origin, but to elucidate those causes which lead to their frequent collision. The written law, which Persia has in common with every Mahomedan country, is termed Sherrâh. It is founded on the Koran, and the Soona, or oral traditions: but, since the establishment of the faith of the Sheahs as the national religion in Persia, the learned men of the ecclesiastical order, who administer this law, have rejected all traditions which come from the three first caliphs,

* I have known only two or three instances of eunuchs being employed in situations of trust during the present reign: I however observed, that they were treated with uncommon attention and deference.

or from others whom they deem the personal enemies of Aly, and the family of the Prophet.

By the theory of a Mahomedan government there should be no other courts of justice except those established for the administration of the Sherrâh, or written law; but in Persia there is another branch of judicature, which is termed Urf, a word which means known or customary; and the name is referrible to the principle that should govern the secular magistrates by whom it is administered, who ought to decide all cases brought before them according to precedent, or custom. This law, if it can be termed such, is never written; for Mahomedans can have no written laws but the Koran and traditions. It varies in different parts of the empire, because it has reference to local as well as common usages. The king, as temporal monarch, is at the head of the Urf, or customary law; which may indeed be considered, through all its branches, an emanation from the royal authority, although it is administered upon principles that are grounded on a professed regard for the habits and prejudices of the people.

There can be no doubt respecting the origin of this system. The rulers and chiefs of Persia, though converts to the Mahomedan faith, have neither been disposed to sacrifice at the shrine of the religion they embraced, their temporal power, nor the laws and usages which they had inherited from their forefathers; and while they submitted to those ordinances which were deemed sacred and indispensable, they have preserved, as more conformable to their prejudices, and to their system of government, the Urf, or customary law; but the administration of this law has always varied with the power and disposition of the monarch. There have been periods

CHAP. XXIII. in the history of Persia * when the religious zeal of the sovereign has caused almost every case to be referred to the ecclesiastical judges; and, at others, the whole authority has been vested in the secular magistrates †. We may safely conclude that the latter are prone to encroach upon the privileges of the former; and as they possess power, they can seldom be at a loss for pretexts to justify their proceedings.

The ecclesiastical order pretend that the Sherrâh, or divine law, which they administer, should take cognizance of all cases whatever; while the courts of Urf, or customary law, supported by the temporal power, have succeeded in limiting their functions to the settlement of disputes about religious ceremonies, inheritance, marriage, divorce, contracts, sales, and all civil cases; while it reserves to itself the decision on all proceedings respecting murder, theft, fraud, and every crime that is capital, or that can be called a breach of the public peace ‡.

The Sudder-ul-Suddoor.

Before the reign of Nâdir Shah, the hierarchy of Persia enjoyed power and wealth. The chief pontiff, or Sudder-ul-Suddoor, was deemed the vicar of the Imaum, and exercised a very extended authority. The priesthood were all subordinate to this spiritual ruler, who resided at court, and nominated, with the approbation of

* In the reign of Sultan Hussein all cases are said to have been decided according to the Sherrâh.

† This was decidedly the case when the empire of Persia was under Nâdir Shah.

‡ Though the lay magistrates reserve to themselves the decision regarding the procedure in cases of murder, they call upon the aid of the court of Sherrâh whenever they desire to act according to the law; and in all such cases evidence is taken, and the law declared by the shaikh-ul-islâm, or presiding judge of the court of Sherrâh.

CHAP. XXIII.

the sovereign, the principal judges of the kingdom. The lands with which the different mosques and charitable buildings were endowed, produced a very great revenue; and the office instituted for the management of these funds acted entirely under the direction of the Sudder-ul-Suddoor, or Nawab, as he was sometimes called, in allusion to his office as lieutenant of the holy Imaum. The policy of Shah Abbas the Great made him desire to abolish an office which vested so great a power in the individual who filled it; and on the occurrence of the death of the chief pontiff no successor was nominated. But his grandson and successor, Shah Suffee, who feared to persevere in this measure, adopted the expedient of appointing two persons to this high dignity. He thought by dividing the power to diminish the influence of those by whom it was enjoyed. One of these pontiffs was distinguished by the name of the Sudder-ul-Suddoor-e-Khas, which signifies "the personal, or King's Chief "Pontiff;" the other was called Sudder-ul-Suddoor-e Aum, or "the Chief Pontiff of the People." The former took rank of the latter, though their duties were nearly the same. Nâdir Shah not only abolished this office* altogether, but seized, as has been related, the lands appropriated to the support of ecclesiastical establishments, in order to pay his troops. These lands have never been *fully restored*;

* Nâdir Shah, when he abolished the office, granted a small pension to the person who held it. His descendants retain this provision and the title of Nawab. In 1800 I dined in company with the present representative of the family. He had come from Yezd to Teheran. Though he had no station, and no duties to perform, he was treated with great respect. All the first nobles and ministers of the kingdom were of the party when I met him, and all concurred in giving the seat of honour in the assembly to the nominal high priest.

CHAP. XXIII. and the hierarchy of Persia is not likely to regain that wealth and power which it once possessed.

The order of chief priests, who are named Mooshtâhed *, have

* The word Mooshtâhed, which is the active participle of an Arabic verb, may be translated "the giver of evidence." This order of high priests existed, though with less authority than they now enjoy, during the reign of the Suffavean monarchs. The learned Kœmpfer has given a very good description of them. He observes, that "in order to captivate the affections, and attract the veneration of the people, "*who alone have the right of conferring this title*, they (the mooshtâheds) affect "exterior sanctity, and the most rigid frugality; they shun honours and amusements, "and all species of frivolities; their only discourse is on holy and edifying subjects, and "all their thoughts appear directed to heaven; they preach the most mild doctrines; "they show the greatest patience with their disciples, whom they correct, not only "without harshness, but with exemplary moderation; they speak little, and are very "sententious; their answers are full of unction, and the odour of the saint seems spread "around them; they wear a white cloak, wove of camels' or goats' hair; their head is "covered with a high white cap, which gives to their countenance a pallid and thin "appearance. When a Mooshtâhed is mounted on his mule, his eyes are always cast "down; two servants are his only attendants, both of whom walk; the one guides the "animal upon which the holy man rides, the other carries his book. These high "priests," (this author continues,) "often recite in the mosques much longer prayers "than those usually said by the faithful, and afterwards retiring into a corner, they "preach and give pious instructions to the multitude, who are in ecstasy with their "sublime devotion. It is with these holy tricks," says Kœmpfer, "that they captivate "men's affections, establish a reputation for sanctity, and obtain from the silent "suffrages of the people a species of supreme pontificate. But it must," he adds, "be acknowledged they do not easily attain success in this career of hypocrisy. The "title of mooshtâhed is only granted to him who is master of seventy sciences, and "even then he must be held in the highest consideration both by the king and the "people." — *Amœnitates Exoticæ*, p. 103, 104.

I cannot but express my own opinion, after making this quotation, that the learned and observing author, from whom it is taken, is rather uncharitable in deeming the

always existed in Persia; but since the abolition of the station of Sudder-ul-Suddoor, they have attained a greater degree of power than they before possessed. It is not easy to describe persons who fill no office, receive no appointment, who have no specific duties, but who are called, from their superior learning, piety and virtue, by the silent but unanimous suffrage of the inhabitants of the country in which they live, to be their guides in religion, and their protectors against the violence and oppression of their rulers, and who receive from those by whose feelings they are elevated a respect and duty which lead the proudest kings to join the popular voice, and to pretend, if they do not feel, a veneration for the man who has attained this sacred rank. There are seldom more than three or four priests of the dignity of *Mooshtâhed* in Persia *. Their conduct is expected to be exemplary, and to show no worldly bias; neither must they connect themselves with the king or the officers of government. They seldom depart from that character

whole life of the mooshtâhed to be a course of hypocrisy. Mahomedans are often bigots, but seldom hypocrites; and a very attentive observation of the character and conduct of the principal mooshtâheds in Persia, has led me to form a very different conclusion regarding their general character, than that made by Kœmpfer. Several of those with whom I have been acquainted have appeared to me men of sincere piety and goodness; and their chief duty, which is to defend the weak against the strong, appears singularly calculated to inspire and preserve sentiments and habits of virtue and rectitude.

* When I was in Persia, there were, I think, five of these high priests: Aga Mahomed Aly, of Kermanshah, (who has been before mentioned,) Meerza Abool Hussein, of Koom, and Hajee Meer Mahomed Hussein, of Isfahan, were the most celebrated. Hajee Syud Hussein, of Kazveen, had died five years before I first visited Persia: but his memory was so highly venerated, that his house continued to be considered a sanctuary.

CHAP. XXIII. to which they owe their rank. The reason is obvious; the moment they deviate, the charm is broken which constitutes their power; men no longer solicit their advice or implore their protection; nor can they hope to see the monarch of the country courting popularity by walking to their humble dwellings, and placing them on the seat of honour when they condescend to visit his court. When a mooshtâhed dies, his successor is always a person of the most eminent rank in the ecclesiastical order; and, though he may be pointed out to the populace by others of the same class seeking him as an associate, it is rare to hear of any intrigues being employed to obtain this enviable dignity.

The mooshtâheds of Persia exercise a great, though undefined, power over the courts of Sherrâh, or written law, the judges of which constantly submit cases to their superior knowledge; and their sentence is deemed irrevocable, unless by a mooshtâhed whose learning and sanctity are of acknowledged higher repute than that of the person by whom judgment has been pronounced. But the benefits which the inhabitants of Persia derive from the influence of these high priests is not limited to their occasional aid of the courts of justice; the law is respected on account of the character of its ministers; kings fear to attack the decrees of tribunals over which they may be said to preside, and frequently endeavour to obtain popularity by referring cases to their decision. The sovereign, when no others dare approach him, cannot refuse to listen to a revered mooshtâhed when he becomes an intercessor for the guilty. The habitations of this high order of priesthood are deemed sanctuaries for the oppressed; and the hand of despotic power is sometimes taken off a city, because the monarch will not offend

a mooshtâhed, who has chosen it for his residence, but who refuses to dwell amid violence and injustice.

The Shaikh-ul-Islâm.

The next in rank to the Mooshtâhed is the Shaikh-ul-Islâm; a term which literally means, "the elder, or chief of the faith;" but which, in its common sense, signifies the supreme judge of the court of Sherrâh, or written law. There is a shaikh-ul-islâm to every principal city in Persia: he is nominated by the king, from whom he receives a liberal salary: but it is a station in which the desire and wishes of the inhabitants are almost invariably consulted, and one to which the individual is usually promoted, from a general belief of his superior sanctity and knowledge. These officers often attain a respect hardly inferior to that enjoyed by the mooshtâhed. They studiously avoid any open connexion with men in power; as even the appearance of such an intercourse would lose them the respect and confidence of the people, who are naturally very jealous of their independence and integrity.

The Cauzee.

In large cities there is a Cauzee*, or judge, under the shaikh-ul-islâm; and the latter has in general the further aid of a council of moollahs, or learned men, many of whom give their services gratuitously, in the hope of increasing their reputation, or of recommending themselves to notice and employment. In the lesser towns there is only a cauzee; and in villages they have seldom more than an inferior moollah, who can read a few sentences of Arabic, which entitles him to perform the ceremonies at a marriage or funeral, to make out common deeds, and to decide on plain

* This officer was originally supreme civil judge in all Mahomedan countries: he still retains great powers in Turkey, though under the mufty: and among the Mahomedan states in India he is the chief judge; but in Persia the cauzee is considered as under the shaikh-ul-islâm in all cities where that high office exists.

CHAP. XXIII. and obvious cases. When subjects of intricacy occur, this officer refers to the cauzee of the neighbouring town, by whom the cause is often carried before the court of the shaikh-ul-islâm, or supreme judge of the provincial capital.

The Mufty.

There is also in Persian courts an officer who bears the name of Mufty, but who has none of those great powers which are associated with that title in Turkey. His duty is more to prepare an exposition of the case before the court, and to aid with his advice, than to decide: but as this office requires a man of learning, his opinion often influences the judgment of his superiors.

The lower ranks of the priesthood in Persia are seldom entitled to a share of that praise which has been bestowed upon some of the superior branches of this order. They neither enjoy, nor can expect, popular fame, as their situations are not permanent; and they seldom rise by gradation to the higher ranks of their profession. They are exposed to great temptation; and receive, with their office, but a very limited income. We can, therefore, believe that there is truth in those accusations which represent them as being in general as ignorant as they are corrupt and bigoted.

The art and venality of the cauzees and moollahs of Persia are often noticed by the writers of that kingdom: and the character of this class has almost always been drawn in the harshest colours by European travellers. One eminent Christian merchant*, who resided many years in Persia, and who enlightened Europe by his observations on that country, states, that "nothing but the establishment "of the Urf, or customary law, which is administered by the

* Chardin.

"secular magistrates, could enable a person, not of the Mahomedan faith, to carry on any commercial transactions in Persia; as the bigotry of the priests, and the strict letter of the only law which they administer, that of the Koran and the traditions, would operate to deprive him of every hope of justice." This writer asserts, that "when an application was made to the courts of Sherrâh against a bankrupt, that he was so sheltered* under its forms and prescriptive laws, that even his goods could not be seized for the payment of his debts: but if the suit," he adds, "was transferred before the lay magistrate, who decided by the customary law, it was only necessary to authenticate the demands against him to obtain an order for the seizure and sale of his property to satisfy them."

The Urf, or customary law, which is administered by the king†, his lieutenants, the rulers of provinces, governors of cities, lay magis-

* The Mahomedan law against debtors is sufficiently severe; and the creditor (if a Mahomedan,) has every means he could desire of recovering his property: but the letter of the Sherrâh, or written law, is in no point favourable to what are termed in its language "unbelievers:" and we can believe that the bigoted ecclesiastics, by whom it was administered, were not even disposed to grant those the benefit of the law.

† In the time of the Suffavean dynasty, we learn from Kœmpfer, Chardin, and others, that there was always a Dewan Beggee, or chief of the council, who superintended this department. That department does not, at this moment, exist. It was one of great power and influence: and the late Monarchs of Persia have probably been jealous of giving it to one of their principal nobles. The late Solimân Khan Kujur was for a day styled Dewan Beggee, in order to adjust a ceremony when I first went to the Court of Persia; and it was alleged, that the person holding that high office represented the person of the king.

trates of towns, managers and collectors of districts, and heads of villages, aided by all the different subordinate officers who act under their authority, bears some resemblance, in its cognisance of petty offences, to that kind of authority which, in better ordered communities, is vested in magistrates of police: but the magistrates in Persia always exercise the chief local authority, and consequently are above the law, instead of being checked by it. Their decrees are instantly enforced by the strong hand of power. They are prompt and arbitrary in their decisions: and as they seldom bestow much time in the consideration of evidence, they are continually liable to commit injustice, even if their intentions are pure. The principal check upon them is the dread of superiors, to whom the injured may always appeal: but it is easier to explain the duties, than to describe the conduct of men, who regulate their actions by the varying disposition of the despot of the day, and are active and just, or corrupt and cruel, as he happens to be vigilant and virtuous, or avaricious and tyrannical.

The lowest of those intrusted with the administration of the Urf, or customary law, hear complaints of all kinds, and summon evidence: and even the heads of villages are allowed to inflict slight punishment, or impose small fines; but if the crime be serious, the delinquent is sent to the person that holds the office of collector and magistrate of the district*, whose power is more extensive: and when the case, either from the magnitude of the property concerned, the rank of the parties, or the heinousness of the crime, appears above the

* This person is called Zaubit. He collects the revenues, and exercises a limited judicial authority.

collector's cognizance, he refers it to the governor of the province, who is generally competent to decide on all cases that do not affect life. But the power to put to death is seldom delegated by the king, unless in cases when a country is in rebellion, or when the government is committed to one of the blood royal. In all other circumstances, when an example is necessary, the proof of the guilt of the criminal, taken, according to legal forms, before the court of Sherrâh, or "written law," is sent to court, and a royal mandate is transmitted for his execution.

The lay magistrates of Persia always hold their courts of justice publicly, which undoubtedly operates as a salutary check upon their proceedings. These courts are sometimes very tumultuous, though the judge is always aided by a crowd of inferior officers, whose duty is to preserve order. The females, who attend these courts, are often the most vociferous; for it is not permitted that the servants of the magistrates should silence them with those blows which, in cases of disturbance, they liberally inflict upon all others.

The jurisdiction of the courts of written and customary law in Persia, neither is, nor can be, from the constitution of the latter, clearly defined. The sovereign and his ministers desire to promote this confusion of authority, which adds to their power and emolument. But though in civil and criminal cases, appeals, or rather complaints, are carried from one of these courts to the other, all deeds, contracts, marriages, and divorces, must be drawn up by the officers of the Sherrâh, or "written law;" and their decisions on such points are received as evidence in the court of the lay magistrate; who is also in the habit of continually referring to them all cases

CHAP. XXIII. which he desires (either from personal* or political reasons) should be decided by their authority: and, in criminal cases, where a regular procedure is adopted, the chief judge of the court of Sherrâh pronounces sentence according to the decrees of the sacred law.

The decisions of the courts of Persia, whether those of written or customary law, are speedily obtained; and a suit in them is attended with little apparent cost, though considerable sums are often given in bribes. The administration of the customary law, or Urf, is more summary than that of Sherrâh, because it is more arbitrary. All forms and delays of law arise out of a respect for persons and property that is unknown to this branch of the administration of justice in Persia; which always imitates, in its decisions, the promptness of that despotic authority from which it proceeds, and by which it is supported.

It has been already stated, that the King of Persia deems himself vested with an authority independent of the law; and considers that he can, from the prerogative of his high condition, take the life or seize the property of any one of his subjects: but it has been shown that the exercise of his absolute power is practically limited. In all cases where he does not personally decide, or delegate his arbitrary authority to others, the criminal law of Persia is administered in a manner conformable to what is laid down in the Koran. Theft may

* In any case where a lay magistrate conceived his decision might involve him in dispute with any person of rank or influence, or when he feared he might, by the punishment of a man of a tribe, excite a dangerous spirit of revenge, he would certainly refer the case to the court of Sherrâh.

be forgiven *, and murder compounded, if the party from whom the property is stolen, or the legal heir of the person that has been slain, are disposed to mercy. Mutilation for theft, though commanded in the Koran, is rarely practised: but the king often inflicts capital punishment on those who are convicted of having stolen to any large amount. When a man or woman is murdered †, the moment the person by whom the act was perpetrated is discovered, the heir at law to the deceased demands vengeance for the blood. Witnesses are examined; and, if the guilt be established, the criminal is delivered into his hands, to deal with as he chooses. It is alike legal for him to forgive him, to accept a sum of money as the price of blood, or to put him to death. This barbarous usage of committing the execution of the law into the hands of the injured individual, is still practised in Persia. It is only a few years ago ‡ that the English

* The Koran states, "If a man or woman steal, cut off their hands, in retribution "for that which they have committed:" but adds, in a subsequent sentence, "Who-"ever shall repent, after his iniquity, and amend, verily God will be turned unto him; "for God is inclined to forgive, and to be merciful." It is from the spirit of the latter passage that commentators have inferred the right of forgiveness in those injured.

† In all cases of murder Mahomed has expressly commanded the law of retaliation. "The free shall die for the free, the servant for the servant, and a woman for "a woman:" but he adds, "He whom his brother shall forgive, may be prosecuted, "and obliged to make satisfaction, according to what is just; and a fine shall be set "upon him with humanity. This is indulgence from your Lord, and mercy: and he "who shall transgress after this, by killing the murtherer, shall be grievously punished." —SALE's *Koran*, Vol. I. page 30.

Manslaughter is, according to the Koran, to be expiated by releasing a believer from slavery, by paying a fine to the relations of the deceased, or by giving alms.

‡ I received the account of this transaction from Mr. Hankey Smith, late British resident at Abusheher.

CHAP. XXIII resident at Abusheher saw three persons delivered into the hands of the relations of those whom they had murdered. They led their victims bound to the burial ground, where they put them to death: but the part of the execution which appeared of most importance, was to make the infant children of the deceased stab the murderers with knives, and imbrue their little hands in the blood of those who had slain their father. The youngest princes of the blood that could hold a dagger were made to stab the assassins of the late Aga Mahomed Khan when they were executed; and it has been before mentioned *, that the successor of Nâdir Shah sent one of the murderers of that monarch to the females of his haram, who, we are told, were delighted to become his executioners.

In the time of the Suffavean kings, the court of the Dewan Beggee, or "supreme criminal judge," not only passed its decisions upon the cases of murder and robbery which occurred in the metropolis, but over the whole kingdom †. This court, we are told, took particular cognizance of four crimes: the knocking out of a tooth, or an eye, cases of rape, and of murder ‡. Other crimes, the same author states, were judged on the spot where they were committed, by the Haukim, or "chief magistrate," who referred all civil suits to the Sherrâh, or "court of written law:" but it is added, that it was the peculiar privilege of nobles, public ministers, and all king's guests, including ambassadors and envoys from foreign states, to have every suit they instituted, or that was brought against them, tried only in the court of the Dewan Beggee, or "supreme judge." The sensible and observing traveller || who gives us this information, also

* Vol. II. page 110. † Kœmpfer. ‡ Ibid. || Ibid.

states, that it was the principle of the Urf, or "customary law," to accommodate itself to the usages of the place where it was administered. This is still the practice; but the high office of Dewan Beggee no longer exists. Its powers are exercised by the monarch; who, however, in most instances where he has appointed one of his sons to the government of a province, has vested him with the power of pronouncing and carrying into execution the sentence of death upon convicted criminals, as well as of taking cognizance of, and punishing all other crimes, formerly noticed by the court of the Dewan Beggee, or "chief criminal "judge*."

The mode, as well as the degree, of punishment of offences, in cases decided by the Sherrâh, or "written law," is the same in Persia as in all other Mahomedan countries: but when the sentence is pronounced by the king, or by those governors or military commanders to whom he has delegated his authority, the punishment varies according to the disposition of the arbitrary will by which it is inflicted. For lesser offences, fines, flogging, and the bastinado, are the most common punishments. Torture is seldom used, but to make men reveal hidden treasures. The inhuman practice of taking out the eyes has long disgraced Persia. The objects of this barbarity are usually persons who have aspired to, or are supposed likely to aspire to the throne. It is also inflicted upon chiefs of tribes, whom it is desirable to deprive of power, without putting them to death; and

* There was formerly, and is still, an officer in the courts of justice called Vakeel-ul-Raya, or "the advocate of the people." The very continuance of the name of this officer, even though his duties may be dormant, proves that there is a desire to have the reputation of attention to justice.

CHAP. XXIII instances occur, as has been related, where this punishment is inflicted on the male inhabitants of a city that has rebelled, in order to strike terror by a dreadful example. The common mode of putting criminals to death in Persia, is by strangling, by decapitation, or by stabbing; but, in cases of enormity, or where there is a desire to make an impression of terror*, or to gratify a passion of revenge, inventive cruelty endeavours to discover new ways of adding to the sufferings of its victims. These are sometimes doomed to have their existence terminated by protracted torture; at others, are empaled, or have their limbs torn asunder by the elastic rebound of the branches of trees that have been bent for the purpose†. An instance has been given of a barbarous chief associating the idea of a luxurious enjoyment with the horrors of the most cruel death, by making a garden of his enemies‡; and the history of Persia abounds with examples too shocking to be related, of tyrants glutting their vengeance, by subjecting their enemies, before they granted them the mercy of death, to the most shameless insults, and horrid injuries.

In Persia women are seldom publicly executed||; nor can their crimes, from their condition in society, be often of a nature to demand

* I find in Mr. Jukes's Journal an account of a dreadful punishment that took place at Teheran, when he was there in 1810. A slave had poisoned the family he served. Though they all recovered, by the instant application of remedies, the man was fully convicted, and sentenced by the king to be hung by the heels in the common market-place, and cut up in the same manner as a butcher does the carcass of a sheep: but he was denied the mercy shown to that animal, of having his throat cut before he was quartered.

† Vide Vol. I. page 73.

‡ Vide Vol. II. page 138.

|| When the case is very aggravated, an example is made. Some time ago, at Tabreez, a woman, who had poisoned her husband, was cast headlong from a high tower by the common executioner.

such examples: but they are exposed to all the violence and injustice of domestic tyranny; and innocent females are too often included in the punishment of their husbands and fathers; particularly where those are of high rank. Instances frequently occur where women are tortured to make them reveal the concealed wealth of which they are supposed to have a knowledge; and when a nobleman, or minister, is put to death, it is not unusual to give away his wives and daughters as slaves; and sometimes (though rarely) they are bestowed on the lowest classes in the community *. This usage is defended on the ground of the necessity of making terrible examples of men who fill high stations; and it is argued, that nothing is so likely to deter others from equal guilt, as the dread of having their families exposed to similar dishonour: but no reasoning can reconcile our minds to a practice, which is at once infamous, inhuman, and unjust; and which marks, perhaps, beyond all others that have been stated, the wanton atrocity of a despotic and barbarous power †.

Beglerbegs, Haukims, and Darogahs, appointed by the king.

The king nominates the Beglerbegs or governors of provinces, and Haukims or governors of cities, who are not required, as a matter of course, to be natives of the place of their government; nor is it necessary that the Darogah, or lieutenant of police, who acts immediately under the Haukim or governor, should be so:

* There are instances of the wives of men of high rank being given to mule drivers.

† The inhabitants of the Turkish provinces in the vicinity of Persia, who are far from being civilized, have a right, from their opposite usage of the females of criminals of rank, to speak of this practice with horror and indignation.

CHAP. XXIII.

Kalanter and Kut-khodah elected by the people.

but the Kalanter, or chief magistrate of the city, and the Kut-khodahs, or magistrates of different wards, though nominated by the king, must as necessarily be selected from the most respectable natives of the city, as the members of the corporation of any city or town in England. Though these officers are not formally elected, we may assert that the voice of the people always points them out: and it may be further stated, that if the king should appoint a magistrate disagreeable to the citizens, he could not perform his duties, which require that all the weight he derives from personal consideration should aid the authority of office. In small towns or villages the voice of the inhabitants in the nomination of their Kut-khodah, or head *, is still more decided; and if one is named whom they do not approve, their incessant clamour produces either his voluntary resignation or removal. These facts are important; for there cannot be a privilege more essential to the welfare of a people, than that of choosing or even influencing the choice of their magistrates. It is true that these cannot always screen them from the hand of power, and they are often compelled to become the instruments of oppression; but still the popularity with their fellow-citizens, which caused their elevation, continues to be their strength; and in the common exercise of their duties they exhibit every attention to their comfort, happiness, and interests. It is important to state in this place, that in every city or town of any

* The head of the village is sometimes called Reis, which is an Arabic phrase, and signifies the head person, or chief in authority. The use of this term in Persia is, I believe, confined to those districts which are inhabited by persons descended from the tribes of Arabia.

consequence, the merchants, tradesmen, mechanics, and labourers, have each a head, or rather a representative*, who is charged with the peculiar interests of his class, and conducts all their concerns with the governor of the town. This person is chosen by the community to which he belongs, and is appointed by the king. He is seldom removed from his situation, except on the complaint of those whose representative he is deemed; and even they must bring forward and substantiate charges of neglect or criminal conduct, before he is degraded from the elevation to which their respect had raised him.

Administration of justice among the wandering tribes.

It must be obvious that no general description of the administration of justice can comprehend the various communities which form the population of an empire like Persia. It has been before mentioned that the military part of the inhabitants of that country are divided into tribes, who derive their origin from different nations. The Turkish from Turkistan, or Tartary; the Arabs from Arabia; and the original tribes of Persia, consisting of Kurdish, Lac, Zund, and many others. All these tribes, though speaking different languages, have nearly similar customs. They usually dwell in tents; subsist upon their flocks, or the chase; and change their residence with the season. The system of the internal government of the whole of this race of men is nearly the same. They profess the Mahomedan religion; and, consequently, acknowledge the authority of the written law as laid down in the Koran and the traditions. During the reign of the Suffavean kings, the Sudder-ul-Suddoor,

* This person is termed Wasta-asanaf, or "the mediator or representative of his class."

CHAP. XXIII. or "chief pontiff," appointed a Cauzee, or judge, to every one of the principal tribes of Persia; and the power of this person formed a considerable check upon the chief of the tribe. Nâdir Shah, when he abolished the office of Sudder-ul-Suddoor, changed this system; and the only persons of a religious character who at present remain with the tribes are moollahs, who can perform marriage ceremonies, give names to children, or repeat the prayers at a funeral. In any cases of importance that they have occasion to refer to the courts of Sherrâh, they apply to the cauzee, or shaikh-ul-islâm, of the nearest town.

The customary law of these tribes differs materially from that of the rest of the population: they have, in fact, a separate system of jurisdiction. Besides the chief, there are persons at the head of each division, or branch, who are called elders. These are in general either nearly or remotely related to the chief, and form the magistracy of the tribe in peace, and its officers in war. Their station is, like that of their chieftain, hereditary. It is from one of this body of elders that the latter, when he does not reside with the tribe, must select his deputy. The person he appoints to this office has as much power over the tribe as a governor of a city has over its inhabitants: and although his rule, from the habits of those under him, is in some instances more lenient and patriarchal, it is in others more absolute, from possessing more of a military character; but, generally speaking, both the chiefs of tribes and those they depute to govern in their absence, are careful to preserve the temper and attachment of their followers. To this observation, however, there are frequent exceptions; and these petty rulers, when powerful, are often both cruel and oppressive.

It is not easy to describe with accuracy the rude system of judicature which prevails in this class of the inhabitants of Persia. Common cases are decided upon by the chief, or his deputy, in a manner similar to the lay magistrate of a city. When, however, a person of any consequence is concerned, the proceeding is not so summary; a council or meeting of elders is called, and the question is fully discussed, and decided by a majority of voices. Any man of family has the privilege to claim this trial, and it would be deemed oppressive to refuse it. In a dispute between inferior persons it cannot be demanded as a matter of right, but is often assembled by a chief or his deputy, who desires popularity, as the tribe almost invariably accord in the justice of a sentence passed by this tribunal.

The council above mentioned is not formed of any determinate number. If it be to decide on any dispute relative to land, the principal landholders form the council *. If on a case of debt, the chief elders, and the friends both of the debtor and creditor, meet to adjust it. When a murder is committed, the relations of the deceased and those of the murderer are summoned before it; and if both belong to the tribe, they are admitted to the assembly. The moollah of the tribe usually forms one of the council, and expounds, when required, the holy law. This council has generally for its object the accommodation of the dispute between the parties which come before it, and it appears to have been constituted to preserve harmony in the tribe †; but when it cannot accommodate the

* Persian MS.

† About eight years ago, a high noble, of the tribe of Kujur, was suspected of treason. The reigning monarch assembled a jaunkhoo, or "council of elders,"

CHAP. XXIII difference, its authority is given to support the law. Among the wandering tribes, as among citizens, if a debtor refuse payment after a cauzee has signed a decree that the demands against him are just, he is either allowed a moderate period to make his payments good, or all his property is seized, and divided in equal shares among his creditors *. A murderer, when the crime is proved, is given up to the heir of the deceased † to do what he chooses with him; either to forgive, to take the price of blood ‡, or to put the criminal to death. It is almost always the object of the council of elders to compound for murder; and they are more anxious to do this when the parties are of different tribes; for if

of the tribe, before whom he laid all the proofs of his guilt. They sentenced him to be severely punished and disgraced. This was a remarkable instance of an absolute sovereign preferring the exercise of his patriarchal power as chief of a tribe, to that of his prerogative as King of Persia.

* The same law regarding bankrupts prevails among the inhabitants of all Mahomedan countries. In Persia, as has been before stated, the power of the magistrate corrects the defects of the religious code, in cases where Jews, Christians, or Hindoos, are creditors.

† If the heir be not twelve years of age, the murderer is confined till he reaches that age. It was upon the pretext of attending to this law, that Abbas the Great evaded the punishment of the person whom he had employed to murder his eldest son, the Prince Suffee Meerza. — Vide Vol. I. p. 562.

‡ The price of blood, as stated in the Koran, is one hundred camels, and freeing a Moslem from captivity: but this verse, like every other in that volume, has been variously interpreted; and, as far as we can judge from the practice in Persia, this fine is not regulated by any precise rules, but depends chiefly on the power the one party has of paying, and the other of exacting. It is also affected by the rank of the party; and the most enormous sums have been sometimes given to induce a tribe to forgive the blood of one of their chiefs.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

pride, or any other motive, prevent this settlement, and the offender is screened from justice, the heir of the person murdered, and his relations, feel disgraced till they can obtain revenge. In these cases, where the party has not force to compel justice, assassination is applauded, though it almost always occasions more murders, and interminable blood feuds*. It is very usual for the heir

* These feuds are most prevalent when the country is most distracted. An ambitious chief employs those who desire to revenge personal or family wrongs to promote his cause. Many instances might be mentioned to show the action of this spirit of revenge. I know none more remarkable than that which recently occurred between the families of the chief of the tribe of Shuftee and that of the governors of Resht, the capital of the small province of Ghilan. A MS. in my possession contains the following statement of this feud, or rather *family war*. "In the time of Shah Sultan "Hussein, Kassim Khan Shuftee slew Aga Kumâl, Governor of Resht, whose son, "Aga Jumâl, slew Kurreem, the son of Kassim, who had murdered his father. Aga "Raffeah, the brother of Kassim, slew Aga Jumâl, and revenged his nephew. "Hedâyet Khan, the son of Aga Jumâl, slew Aga Raffeah, and five of his brothers "and nephews: a child, called Aga Aly, the son of Kassim, was the only person of "the family of Shuftee that was preserved. Hedâyet Khan desiring to employ the "tribe of Shuftee, was compelled to put this child at their head, as they refused to serve "except under one of the blood of their chief. Aga Aly made his escape; and when he "attained his sixteenth year, he was aided by Aga Mahomed Khan in an attempt to "revenge his father, uncle, and brother. He succeeded in taking Hedâyet Khan, "whom he slew. Two of that chief's sons, Hussein Aly and Futteh Aly, were sent to "the Persian Court; and when the present king obtained the throne, he gave the "former a small force to endeavour to recover Ghilan. This chief ordered two of his "men to conceal themselves in a wood to assassinate Aga Aly, as he passed along a "road in their vicinity: they were successful in doing so; and the relations of that chief, "alarmed at his fate, fled to the island of Lankeroon, and claimed the protection of "Moostâphâ Khan Talish. The reigning monarch invited them to return to their family "possessions of Shuft. On his sending a sealed Koran, as the most sacred of all

CHAP. XXIII of a person who has been murdered to demand, not only goods and horses, but one or more of the nearest female relations* of the murderer in marriage: and this is deemed the best of all modes of ending the feud, as it binds those in ties of kindred who were before the most inveterate enemies.

The tribes of Persia have very different usages relative to forgiveness of murder: some have a pride in being considered implacable, and invariably exact life for life; but this is certainly not common. If a person belonging to a tribe desire forgiveness for a murder that he has committed, it is usual for him to hang a sword round his neck with a black cord, and to go in that suppliant manner to the heir, and declare, when he approaches him, that he comes to receive his doom. Though the laws of honour almost always restrain his enemy from putting him to death, it is very rare that even the mandates of his superiors can compel one of these fierce barbarians to save his life by what he deems an unmanly

" pledges, they came back; but they thought of nothing but revenge: day and night " they watched the movements of Hussein Kooli: at last one of the brothers of Aga " Aly succeeded in shooting him as he was riding along the road. There has yet," the writer who gives this account states, " appeared no man of courage among the " descendants of Hedâyet Khan; but the murdered Hussein Kooli has left an infant " son; and if this boy," he adds, " prove worthy of his family, he will no doubt " revenge the blood of his father."

At the period this account was written, A. D. 1810, the feud between the families of Shuftee and Resht had continued about seventy years.

* The person who receives a bride in this manner neither pays the customary sums to his father-in-law, nor settles a dowry on his wife. It is not unusual to demand two or three females from the family of the murderer, for the heir and nearest relations of the deceased.

and abject submission. When a man of a wandering tribe, or a poor citizen, who has committed murder, is condemned to pay the price of blood, but cannot raise the amount required, it is customary to oblige him to wear a large iron collar round his neck, and to beg from all he meets, till he collect enough to discharge the fine. The persons who carry this symbol of their guilt and repentance are the most importunate of mendicants. CHAP.XXIII

The crimes of rape or of adultery are, among the wandering tribes in Persia, of very rare occurrence, and are almost always punished with death, which is generally inflicted by the hands of the nearest relation of the females whose honour has been violated*. The promiscuous manner in which these tribes live, admit of no laxity upon this point, as such could not fail of producing general depravity. The consequence is, that the chastity of their females is guarded by usages that are never infringed with impunity: and in cases of adultery, both parties are often the victims of jealousy and revenge†; and if the fact be proved, the murderer is always applauded for having vindicated his insulted honour.

If the chief of a tribe commit any open act of treason or of hostility against the government, the king, if he can seize him, deprives him of sight, or puts him to death, without hesitation: but if he has merited capital punishment for any other crime‡ than treason, the case is referred to the Sherrâh, or "court of "written law," that his blood may not rest upon the monarch.

* Persian MS.

† When I asked a well-informed chief of one of these tribes what punishment was inflicted on a female who was proved an adulteress, he answered, that her father, her husband, or her son, cut her to pieces!

‡ Persian MS.

CHAP. XXIII. It is not unusual, when a man of inferior rank belonging to a tribe, but in the king's immediate employ, merits death, for the king to make him over to his chief, who usually repays the confidence reposed in him by his immediate execution. All these circumstances, as connected with the administration of justice among the military tribes of Persia, are calculated to show that they are governed by customs essentially different from those of the inhabitants of towns and villages; and that they are, in some degree, shielded by their habits, their union, and strength, from that oppression, to which some of the other classes in Persia are subject.

With respect to the interference of the king with the internal administration of the wandering tribes, it can only be said that it continually fluctuates. Those, over whom circumstances give him power, allow him to do what he pleases; while the same tribe, differently situated, would revolt if he offered the slightest infringement of their usages. By the constitution of these tribes, they should be governed through their chief, whom it is always the object of the court to render a subservient instrument of its will: but still the influence of the head of the tribe continues, under all circumstances*, with a force that can hardly be credited, except by those who have been in the habit of contemplating the bigoted tenacity with which

* The author of a memoir on the chiefs of Khorassan, after giving an account of Jaaffer Khan, late ruler of Nishapore, and now in confinement at Teheran, states, "the "tribe of Byât, though treated with great kindness, still continue to desire the return "of their cruel chief, Jaaffer Khan; and they are not withheld, by the memory of his "oppression and injustice, from saving all they can from their small means, and secretly "transmitting it for his support."

men, born in such communities, preserve the first and deepest impression made upon their mind, of the virtue, as well as necessity, of an inviolable attachment to their hereditary lord. CHAP. XXIII

The Bukhteeâree*, and several other tribes, can hardly be said to have ever entirely submitted to the Kings of Persia. Guarded by their inaccessible mountains, these rude races continue to be ruled by their own customs, and admit of hardly any interference on the part of the officers of government in their internal jurisdiction. They consent to furnish a body of their youth as soldiers, and to pay a small tribute, that they may obtain a share of the produce of some of the fine vallies that lie at the foot of the hills which they inhabit; and every effort is made to encourage them to occupy those plains, not merely with the view of rendering them more tangible to the laws of the country, but to prevent (by giving them an interest in the general peace and order of society,) those frequent predatory attacks which they are in the habit of making upon the more peaceable and civilized part of the population of the kingdom.

The Arabian tribes, who are settled along the shores and on the islands of the Persian Gulf, continue to follow many of the usages of their ancestors. The interference of the king, or his officers, in the internal rule of these tribes, depends upon the state of subjection in which they are to his government; and that varies with those events which tend to weaken or strengthen his authority over the part of his kingdom which they inhabit. All the tribes who dwell upon the

* The Bukhteeâree and Fylee tribes inhabit the ranges of mountains which stretch from Isfahan to Shuster, and from the latter city to near Kermanshah.

CHAP. XXIII continent of Persia, when the country is at peace, may be deemed subject to the authority of the officers of the government: but these seldom exercise any control over the inhabitants of the islands *, even when the latter profess an allegiance to the Monarch of Persia.

It is the custom in Persia for the principal officers of the empire, and the chiefs of tribes, who are employed or dwell at a distance, to have a part of their family at the capital. These hostages (for such they are deemed,) are always watched, but seldom strictly guarded, unless where the person, for whose fidelity they are a pledge, is suspected of treason. When he actually rebels, they are sometimes put to death: but examples of this severity are not frequent. The dread of their occurrence, however, while it retains numbers in the path of duty, makes every ruler, who is at all independent, refuse, as long as he is able to do so, to comply with this custom; and his consenting to send his eldest son, or any part of his family, to remain at court, is always considered as a token of complete submission.

The condition of the principal feudatories of Persia has been noticed. These, though they acknowledge the paramount power of the monarch, have always denied his right of interference in the internal government of their country. The Waly or Prince of Georgia, whose territories have recently become a province of Russia, held, for many years, the first rank among those great tributaries. The Waly

* At present, almost all the islands in the Gulf of Persia may be deemed independent of the king of that country. The small island of Kharruck is the only one in which there is a garrison of his troops. He, however, claims a right of sovereignty over them all.

of Ardelan, in Kurdistan, still enjoys the dignity and privileges that belonged to his ancestors. This chief exercises all the functions of a sovereign within the limits of his hereditary possessions. His system of government is, in its general features, the same as that established in other parts of Persia, only that his personal authority is limited by the situation in which he is placed; for he is checked in the exercise of his power by the fear of the superior lord, as well as the necessity of preserving that attachment to his person which constitutes his strength.

Though there are several cities in Kurdistan, the military tribes of that country seldom inhabit either towns or considerable villages; nor do they assemble, except for purposes of war, in large encampments. The dwelling of the native of this province is often solitary; and whether the Kurds reside in houses or tents, it is seldom that more than a few families dwell together. This custom, whether it arises from the nature of the country *, or from adherence to ancient usage, is calculated to retard every progress to improvement. We have, indeed, evidence of the inhabitants of this country continuing in an unchanged state for more than twenty centuries †. Neither the rays of civilisation which enlightened Persia under Nousheerwan, nor those that shone upon the neighbouring provinces of Arabia and Turkey under the most celebrated of the caliphs, ever penetrated amid the wilds of Kurdistan, though these were situated in the immediate vicinity of Ctesiphon and of Bagdad. The Kurd saw and despised a know-

* The Lesghees are remarkable for having their habitations similar to the Kurds.

† Vide Vol. II. page 207.

CHAP. XXIII. ledge, which was accompanied by an effeminacy and luxury that rendered man more subject to the oppression and cruelty of his rulers. He preferred the savage freedom which he enjoyed amid his rugged mountains, and felt a pride in the privations and hardships to which he was exposed, when he regarded them as associated with his independence. It is not surprising that religion should never have made any great progress amid such a people. There is no proof of their ever having been zealous followers of the worship of Zoroaster; and though they now profess the faith of Mahomed, they are, in general, not only inattentive to the substance, but careless in the observance of the ceremonies it prescribes. In Sennah, which is the capital of Ardelan, and in some of the other towns, there are mosques and priests; and in these, the Sherrâh, or "written law," is observed in nearly the same manner as in other parts of Persia. The principal distinction arises from most of the inhabitants of Kurdistan being Soonees; and their laws are, consequently, founded on the interpretation of the authorities which are respected by that sect. Among the ruder tribes of this province, the Sherrâh, or "written "law," meets with little attention. They continue to be governed by the usages of their forefathers, and yield an obedience to their chief, which he repays by his protection, and by exercising his authority, on all occasions, with the utmost regard to their customs and prejudices *.

* A remarkable instance of this occurred when I visited Persia in 1810. I was encamped at a village called Zâghâ, situated within twenty-five miles of Sennah, the capital of Ardelan. The officer who attended as Mehmândâr, or "entertainer," to the mission on the part of the Waly, informed me, that a man of the tribe of Soorsoor (some families of which were encamped within a mile,) had, the day before, murdered

There are several districts in Kurdistan whose inhabitants profess allegiance to the Monarch of Persia, but who are even more independent of all attempts at interference with their internal government than the province of Ardelan, because their mountains are more inaccessible. Among these, one of the most remarkable is a branch of the tribe of Hâkâry *, who dwell in that lofty ridge of hills

his father. " He will, of course, be put to death," I observed. " I do not *think* he " will," said the mehmândâr : " he is himself heir, and there is no one to demand the " blood."—" Will not the prince of the country take care that this parricide does " not escape ?"—" The Waly," he coolly replied, " cannot interfere, in a case like " this, unless appealed to : and, after all," said he, " if the affair be agitated, the " murder will be compounded. Among Kurds, who are always at war," he added, " the life of an active young man is much too valuable, to be taken away on account of a dead old one!"

* This petty state, if we can credit those accounts we receive of it, have continued, for centuries, to enjoy more freedom than almost any other Asiatic tribe or nation can boast. Their ruler is a direct descendant from Júz-u-deen Sheer, a chief of the tribe of Hâkâry, who was Governor of Van when the Ameer Timour attacked that province. They are represented as constant in their allegiance to this family, except when serious complaints are urged against the reigning representative. On such occasions, the Agas, or " heads of the different branches of the tribes," whose condition is also hereditary, assemble, and summon him to attend. His conduct is tried; and if a majority of voices decide that he is unfit to rule, a particular leader places a pair of slippers before him. The chief immediately rises; and, putting them on, walks out of the assembly. The next heir succeeds: but the discarded ruler is protected in the enjoyment of the personal property of his family. We are assured, that all the usages of this community display the same character; and that, in their internal administration, the lowest individual is treated with respect and consideration by his superiors. There is an account of this tribe in the History of Kurdistan. I received some curious anecdotes of their usages from an intelligent officer who accompanied me from Tabreez, and had long lived in the neighbourhood. He told me, that they were

CHAP. XXIII. which lies immediately west of the Lake of Oormia, and approaches the vicinity of the Town of Sâlmâs, in Aderbijan.

Several of the chiefs of Khorassan, who profess allegiance to the Kings of Persia, are as independent of his authority, in the internal rule of their possessions, as the Waly of Ardelan: but their situation differs from his in this essential respect: he inherits a power which has been enjoyed by his ancestors for many centuries; theirs is of recent usurpation; and its destruction, and the subjugation of their principalities to a similar condition with the other parts of Persia, would be considered as the natural and just consequence of the re-establishment of the royal authority: whereas, any attempt to reduce Kurdistan to that condition, would be deemed a departure from the policy of the wisest and most powerful of the Monarchs of Persia, who have always respected the rights of the chiefs and the inhabitants of that country: and we may here notice a remarkable fact in proof of this observation, that, though some of their rulers boast a descent from the family of Mahomed, neither Arabian nor Tartar tribes have ever permanently settled in that great province.

Mode of collecting the revenue, and its amount.

The mode of collecting the revenue in Persia is so intimately connected with the general administration of justice, that the subjects cannot be separated. The same officer sometimes presides over both: and this union of power is favourable or unfortunate for the

seldom engaged in internal wars: but that, recently, after the majority had decided to depose a ruler, the Aga, whose duty it was to place the slippers, had refused to do so. This had produced a division; and Abbas Meerza, the Prince Royal of Persia, had interfered in favour of the deposed chief, but had failed in his efforts to restore him to his authority.

inhabitants of the country, according to the personal character of the ruler in whom it is vested.

The fixed revenue of Persia, which amounts at present to about three millions sterling, is chiefly derived from the produce of crown and government lands *, from taxes and imposts upon the landed property of individuals, and upon every species of goods and merchandise. Before the time of Nâdir Shah, a great proportion of land had been granted for the support of the ecclesiastical establishment, which had been equally enriched by the generosity of the Kings of the Suffavean dynasty, and by the piety of their subjects. Personal estates had also increased during the long period of tranquillity which Persia had enjoyed under this dynasty to a very great extent: but Nâdir, as has been before stated †, seized that property which had been appropriated for the support of the ecclesiastical body; and amid the revolutions that have succeeded his usurpation, almost all the principal families of Persia have perished, and their estates fallen into the possession of the crown. A very small portion of that territory which once belonged to the hierarchy of the country has been restored. The priests are at present chiefly supported by pecuniary stipends; and a deduction from the revenue is admitted in every province to pay the judges of

* Chardin, in his account of the revenue of Persia, makes a distinction between what he terms royal domains and government lands: the former, he observes, are more particularly at the disposal of the king. The domains, as he uses this term in opposition to Khâlesâh, or "government lands," means the royal estates that have been long appropriated to support palaces, and certain parts of the royal household and establishment.

† Vide Vol. II. page 105.

CHAP. XXIII. the courts of Sherrâh, to keep colleges and mosques in repair, and to maintain religious establishments*.

Crown lands are cultivated by the peasantry of the province on terms † very favourable to the cultivator. When the crop has been measured ‡ by an officer appointed for the purpose, if the seed be supplied by government, it is returned, and ten per cent of the whole is next put aside for reapers and thrashers; after which the crop that remains is equally || divided between the cultivator and the king. Lands that are the property of individuals § pay accord-

* I possess no documents that can enable me to state, with any correctness, the exact provision made for the priesthood in Persia. The Mooshtâheds, or chief pontiffs, usually live upon their own means, or have lands assigned them. If there are any *Wukf*, or "charity lands," in the province to which they belong, they are placed under their management. The Paish-Nâmâz, or chief officiating priests, at the mosques, have often a salary from four to twelve hundred piastres per annum: but many of the most respected of their class perform the duty gratuitously. The shaikh-ul-islâm, cauzee, &c. have all fixed salaries. In the City of Isfahan, the sums paid to persons of this description were estimated at ten thousand tomâns per annum. The annual pay of the shaikh-ul-islâm at Shiraz was two thousand tomâns.

† These terms are said to have been first settled by Nousheerwan the Just. They are certainly of great antiquity.

‡ The crop is measured on the ground. The expression in the Persian MS. from which I write is, "*as it stands*," which evidently means before it is reaped.

|| In one account it is stated, that this mode varies, and that the cultivator, in some parts of the kingdom, pays two thirds to the king.

§ The estates of individuals are of different tenures: some free; others pay a small quit rent; and some of a tenure not unlike our copyhold: they are held by deeds for ninety-nine years, renewable on paying the fine of a year's rent.—Vide CHARDIN, Vol. V. page 382, new edit.

ing to their situation in respect to water. When that is certain, and obtained from a flowing stream, they pay twenty per cent of their produce, after deducting seed and the allowance before stated for reapers and thrashers. If watered from aqueducts*, they pay fifteen per cent; and if from wells, or reservoirs, only five. The duty on estates is generally farmed by the owners, which prevents trouble and vexatious interference of the subordinate officers of the revenue with the landholder.

Every encouragement is held out to the cultivators to sow those government lands, the crops of which depend solely upon rain. If the cultivator find the seed, ten per cent † only is demanded for the king. This crop is sometimes abundant, but often fails altogether. This description of land, if it belong to individuals, is seldom cultivated; when it is, the proprietor pays five per cent on the actual produce.

The mode of settlement that has been described, applies to what is termed the summer harvest ‡. In that of winter ||, rice is the only grain, the cultivation of which is regulated by the same rules. The seed of every thing else that is sown at this season §

* There is nothing of greater value in Persia than water: and the government construct and keep aqueducts in repair: but the cultivator is usually made to pay for watering his fields and garden in a proportion that exceeds the expenditure, and constitutes the right of supplying water into a source of revenue.

† Another MS. states twenty per cent: but when this is the case, it is probable government find the seed.

‡ The Shutvee.

|| Syfee.

§ What has been said regarding the harvest, chiefly applies to the provinces of Irak, Aderbijan, and part of Fars, where the summer crop, as it is termed, is reaped between the middle of the month of June and the end of July. In the more

CHAP. XXIII. of the year is furnished by the cultivator. The crop is divided into three parts, of which one only is the property of government. Private estates pay ten per cent of the produce on winter crops.

The above may be assumed as the general principles by which the collection of revenue from land, in most of the provinces of Persia, is adjusted. Local circumstances and usages may make the amount of the government share vary in some parts of the kingdom; but the difference is immaterial. The compact between the owners and cultivators of land and the government is simple, and well understood by all parties. The former often pay a considerable proportion of their rent in kind. This, however, is regulated by convenience, usage, and the ability of the cultivators. Some villages, of which the inhabitants are poor, pay the government share almost entirely in kind: but when the farmer has wealth, he generally prefers making cash payments for the whole, as he avoids, by that means, the interference of the inferior officers of the revenue department. According, however, to the general and established rule, the cultivator should pay half in money and half in kind *.

arid regions of Persia it is much earlier. At Shuster, and in almost all the provinces of Khuzistan and Deishestan, the seed is put into the ground in the latter end of November or beginning of December.

* I find it mentioned in a note upon a statement of the revenues of Persia, that for every tomân that is paid in money, one khurwâr, or ass load of grain, is also levied. The khurwâr of grain is one hundred Tabreez maunds, about seven hundred pounds weight: and the fixed price, when it is taken in money, as it generally is, ought to be one tomân per khurwâr; so that the amount in kind is equal to that in money. Of late years, however, government have often exacted at the rate of one tomân and a half, and even two tomâns, per khurwâr.

The general mode of settling for large tracts of land does not of course apply to rich and highly manured fields, or to gardens in the immediate vicinity of towns. This is the only kind of land that is enclosed. It is generally rented for money, and often at a very high rate. When Persia was in a tranquil state, we are assured that some of the ground in the vicinity of Isfahan produced more than thirty crowns a jurreeb, which measurement is not above three quarters of an acre*: but this must have been either garden ground, or fields set apart for the cultivation of melons†.

The government is always ready to dispose of waste land, particularly if it be required to build upon, or to plant a garden. A heritable lease is given, subject to a small ground tax; and the fruit trees and vines that are raised become subject to a tax, which varies according to the age of the tree and the quality of the fruit. The fixed tax upon fruit is very moderate ‡, and the extraordinary assessment cannot fall heavy, else this delightful luxury could not be raised in the abundance and at the cheap rate which it always is in Persia.

* Chardin has given some very curious information upon this subject.

† Melons have always been cultivated in great abundance in the vicinity of that capital.

‡ In a statement which I received at Shiraz, in A. D. 1800, from a very intelligent native of that city, I find the tax on vineyards and fruit trees as follows:

Vineyards, *faryab*, or "certain water,"	6 deenars per vine.
If *bukhs*, or "uncertain water,"	5 ditto ditto.
Apple, pear, peach, &c.	20 ditto per tree.
Walnuts	100 ditto ditto.

The deenar here stated is a nominal coin, in which accounts are kept. There are one thousand deenars to the piastre, or about five hundred to the English shilling.

CHAP. XXIII

Both the form and the policy of the Persian government have always disposed it to grant arable lands to the wandering tribes on the most favourable terms; but these seldom cultivate more than is necessary for their own consumption. The vast tracts of fine pasture lands which are allotted for their winter and summer residence, are considered as part payment for their military service; but a tax is levied upon families, according to their wealth and the number of their cattle and flocks *, which is collected by their chief, or by those whom he deputes to exercise his authority.

A part of the fixed revenue of Persia is derived from ground rents of houses, rents of caravansaries, baths, shops, water-mills, manufactures †, and duties upon all kinds of foreign and home merchandise. Some of the sources of this part of the revenue have greatly increased since the extinction of the Suffavean family, and of that of Kurreem Khan, both of which revolutions have been attended with immense confiscations. Whole streets in the principal cities, which before belonged to individuals, have become the property of government, and are rented to its subjects. The

* This duty is not always the same, but it is never high. In the statement of collections which I received at Shiraz, and to which I have before alluded, I find it rated to the inhabitants of that city and district as follows:

A milch cow pays annually	300	deenars.
An ass	200	ditto.
A brood-mare	1000	ditto.
A camel	300	ditto.
A Sheep[6]	700	ditto.

† This includes cloths of all kinds, glass, leather, hardware, earthenware, &c.

[6] This appears disproportionate.

revenue collected from shops is very considerable. When these belong to government a rent is fixed, which is deemed proportionate to the gain derived by those who hire them. When they belong to individuals, the government claims twenty per cent of their computed annual profits. There is no impost in Persia that can be called a capitation tax, according to the strict sense of that term; but the mode of collecting the ground rents, and share of shop profits, in cities and towns, and that of levying the duties from the wandering tribes, is regulated by a similar principle. These imposts * are made according to general rules, and laid on houses or families, who pay them, not agreeably to their actual condition at the moment, but as they are rated.

The principles, however, upon which the whole of the fixed revenue of Persia is settled are at once just and moderate; and the system is so perfectly understood, that it is attended with neither difficulty nor oppression: but, unfortunately for that country, its monarchs have never been satisfied with the produce of this revenue; and the justice and moderation of the established assessment have only served to make the inhabitants of Persia feel more sensibly those irregular and oppressive taxes to which they are continually exposed. The first of these extra taxes may be termed usual and extraordinary presents. The usual presents to the king are those made annually by all governors of provinces and districts, chiefs of tribes, ministers, and all other officers in high charge, at the feast of

* The revenue term, Ser Shûmâree, or "numbering of individual heads," and Khânâh Shûmâree, or "numbering of families," which are used in Persia to describe the mode of collection, show that these duties approximate to a capitation tax.

Nouroze, or vernal equinox *. These gifts are regulated by the nature of the office and the wealth of the individual, and consist of the best of the produce of every part of the kingdom. Sometimes a large sum of money is given, and this is always the most acceptable present that can be made. There is a necessity for every officer of high rank making this annual offering, which is indeed deemed part of the revenue; and, as such, falls ultimately upon the farmers, cultivators, and manufacturers. The amount presented on this occasion is generally regulated by usage: to fall short, is loss of office; and to exceed, is increase of favour. The tribute paid to the King of Persia by those princes and chiefs who own him as their paramount lord, is transmitted at this season, and may be classed under the same head as the other presents given at the Nouroze. We are assured that the receipts from this branch of revenue amount to nearly as much as two fifths of the fixed revenue of the kingdom: and we are more reconciled to a belief of this fact, from a knowledge that one governor of a province has for several years past never made an annual present of less than one hundred thousand tomâns †.

* There is every reason to conclude that this usage of receiving presents on the Nouroze has existed in Persia from the most early times.

† Mr. Morier, who saw the offerings presented to the king on the feast of Nouroze, A. D. 1808, states, that the paishkush, or offering of Hajee Mahomed Hussein Khan, was " fifty-five mules, each covered with a fine Cashmere shawl, " and carrying a load of one thousand tomâns." This respectable nobleman, who is minister of finance, and governor of Isfahan and all the districts subordinate to that city, derives his power to make these splendid offerings to his sovereign from the most legitimate of all sources — the general improvement of the country committed to his charge.

Besides the usual tribute from dependant princes and chiefs, and presents from officers in high station, which are made at the Nouroze, there are extraordinary presents of a less defined nature, but which are also of very considerable amount. It is not customary to collect duties in camp; but the merchants admitted to attend it are expected to give collectively a large offering in money to the king. Every person appointed to high employ makes a present, as a token of his gratitude: and this amount, which is usually settled before his nomination, may often be deemed the purchase money of his station. Monopolies are not unknown in Persia; but this invidious mode of increasing the revenue is not common. The produce of fines imposed on crimes by the courts of Urf, or "customary law," and of involuntary presents extorted from those who are suspended or dismissed from employment, which are levied on the pretext of delinquency, is very considerable: and we are not surprised when informed, that the amount annually collected from these, and other sources equally corrupt and oppressive, has been estimated at six hundred thousand tomâns; a sum equal to one fifth of the fixed revenue of the state: but it is impossible to make any exact calculation of an amount which depends so much upon the character of the monarch.

The most oppressive of all the imposts of Persia is called Sâdir; a term which means "a public requisition;" and, in its opposite sense to the Malliaat, or "fixed revenue," denotes that description of taxation which is raised to provide for extraordinaries. If an addition is made to the army; if the king desires to construct an aqueduct, or build a palace; if troops are marching through the country, and require to be furnished with provisions; if a foreign

CHAP. XXIII. mission arrives in Persia; if one of the royal family is married; or, in short, on any occurrence not ordinary, an impost is laid, sometimes upon the whole kingdom, and at others only on particular provinces. This is regulated by the nature of the occurrence which requires the supply, and a consideration of its local or general application.

The Sâdir extends to all classes. It usually bears lightest upon the wandering tribes, not only because they are the poorest, but because they are the most impatient of this species of taxation. It falls heaviest upon the proprietors of estates, and citizens. It is, or rather ought to be, levied according to defined rules; and every person should pay the Sâdir, or "contribution," in the proportion that he pays the Malliaat, or "fixed revenue:" but the governors of provinces usually exercise an arbitrary discretion in the collection of this tax, which renders it more oppressive*. They settle the gross amount that each village is to pay; and this affords them an opportunity of showing partiality, and committing injustice. The sum derived from this source has been calculated at two fifths of the amount of the fixed revenue: and it has been concluded, on the grounds above stated, that the receipts of the King of Persia from presents, fines, and extraordinary taxes, are equal to the amount of the established taxes, which make the revenue of the kingdom amount to a sum little less than six millions sterling: but a proportion of this only is paid in money into the royal treasury. A large deduction is

* This tax is often rendered very severe upon the poorer class of cultivators, by the necessity they are under of selling the crops upon the ground at a low price, in order to pay it. It is not unusual to see grain selling for two tomâns and a half the load, or seven hundred pounds, which the farmer has sold at one tomân.

made for the expenses of collection, and a considerable proportion is received in kind, and used for public purposes. It is also a general practice to pay the chief ministers of religion and of justice, the principal officers of state, the royal household, and the army, by assignments on the public revenue of different provinces.

There are sufficient grounds to conclude that the general account which has been given of the revenue of Persia is tolerably correct. It rests upon the authority of well-informed natives. Perhaps the total amount stated to be collected is somewhat exaggerated. The disbursements of the government of Persia cannot easily be ascertained: but we know, as a positive fact, that they are much less than the receipts. It has in general been the policy of the monarchs of that kingdom, as of most Asiatic despots, to amass wealth; for in all countries where there is no public credit, a full treasury is deemed essential to the security of the state.

It will be important, before we conclude this short account of the nature of the government of Persia, and of the mode of administering justice and collecting the revenues in that kingdom, to offer a few general observations upon the power of the monarch, and the practical effects of the whole system of the internal administration of the country.

Nothing can be more difficult than to describe the operation of the separate parts, or the whole of a system of government, which is exposed, like that of Persia, to continual and violent changes: but, though these changes produce a great effect both on the character and condition of the nation, they neither destroy nor materially alter those rules which are established for the conduct of the administration, and which, guarded as they are by usage, by public opinion,

CHAP. XXIII and by religion, are seldom infringed with impunity. The government of this country may be termed a military despotism, the action of which is regulated by a consideration of the condition of its subjects, and the situation of the empire. The power of the Monarch of Persia rests chiefly upon the fear he inspires. It has been well observed, that the arm of a despotic prince should be always uplifted. He must be prompt to repel foreign attack, and to repress every appearance of sedition, or rebellion; for, surrounded by the ambitious and the turbulent, he can enjoy no security, and his subjects can know no peace, unless he be dreaded. Powerful nobles, and high officers of the empire, are, from its frame, arbitrary in their respective charges; and when these cease to tremble at the supreme authority, the nation suffers a great increase of misery under a multitude of tyrants.

The chief ministers of the Court of Persia enjoy a very considerable, though indirect power, from being the medium of representation to a sovereign who generally acts from the impulse of the moment, and whose decisions must consequently be much regulated by the sentiments of those in whom he reposes confidence. This kind of power, of doing good or evil by secret or open communication with the king, belongs, in a greater or less degree, to all the officers of his government, and the domestics of his household: and, as the nature of absolute power makes it impossible that persons so immediately attached to the monarch should be amenable to any inferior tribunal, it follows that this class should be entirely subject to his will. It is impossible, from the shape of the government, that the condition of this class of persons should be otherwise than it is: and no small proportion of that security which the rest of the com-

munity enjoy, may be referred to the danger in which those near the king continually stand; for, unless he be very weak or very unjust, it is hazardous for any of his ministers, or courtiers, to commit violence or injustice in his name.

The governors and chiefs of tribes may be considered in nearly the same relation to the king as his ministers: and when we reflect on the facility which the habits of the Persian monarch afford to his subjects of preferring complaints *, and that policy which dictates attention to them, we must be satisfied that, in a rude and half-civilized community, the exercise of the absolute power of the sovereign over those to whom he delegates his authority, is essential to preserve the people, at large, from the oppression and rapacity of petty rulers.

Though a great proportion of the Kings of Persia may be deemed capricious, cruel, and unjust, we find very few examples in the history of that country of their exercising their absolute prerogative, except over those whom usage, and the condition of the state they govern, have placed at their disposal: but this class has of late become more numerous, from the frequent wars and rebellions with which the kingdom has been afflicted. Amid scenes of revolution, neither life nor property is safe, as the peaceable inhabitants of the country are

* Every individual who resides at the capital, or has the means of going to it, may find an opportunity of personally communicating with the king. The usual time is at the morning salam, or "levee." A short time ago an English artillery serjeant, employed in disciplining the Persian troops, availed himself of this circumstance to prefer a complaint to the king against a paymaster, who had kept back his pay. He succeeded in his application for redress; and the proceeding, on his part, was considered perfectly regular.

CHAP. XXIII. dragged into a participation of the crimes of the different individuals who are aspiring to the crown; and that very weakness which compelled them to acknowledge one party, too often invites the other to plunder them: but it is never considered that a monarch can be justified, unless under the circumstances which have been mentioned, in seizing the property, or taking the life of any of his subjects, not in his immediate employ.

The King of Persia always exercises his power as the chief magistrate of the Urf, or "customary law," in his own capital, and the district surrounding it; and all civil and criminal cases, after being examined by subordinate officers of justice, are submitted to him for decision. His numerous occupations compel him, in the performance of this part of his duty, to trust, in a great degree, to others, or to form a very hasty judgment on the cases brought before him: and this summary proceeding, added to the mode of execution, which is generally in his presence, and is always inflicted by executioners* who attend his person, often give a character of barbarous tyranny to acts of the most exemplary justice. We generally find, that in a country like Persia the inhabitants of the capital, who are under the immediate jurisdiction of the monarch, are the happiest, and the best governed. Their temper is of more consequence to the despot than that of any other part of his subjects; and they are, therefore, treated with more lenity and consideration. They are seldom exposed to be tyrannised over by any other than the sovereign: and assuredly of all

* The Ferâshhâ-e-Ghuzzub, or "executioners," (literally "servants of anger or "violence,") always attend the king, and are ready, at every moment, to execute his commands.

the evils which belong to absolute power, the greatest is the necessary delegation of its vast authority to mean and sordid agents, whose minds must, from their condition, be insensible to many of the higher motives that may be expected to influence the conduct of the chief ruler.

Many European travellers, who have resided at the capital of Persia, have felt a very natural horror at the tyranny of particular sovereigns; and have given, in consequence, an exaggerated picture of the condition of that country. One writer affirms, that "the Persians expect injustice from their kings*:" but the idiomatic phrases which he adduces to support this assertion, only prove that they recognise an unlimited power in their sovereign, which they will admit in no other person. The same author, whose experience was very great, and whose local knowledge was very minute, after a detail of the caprice and cruelty of the Kings of Persia, upon which the philosophers of his country have grounded many just, and some erroneous opinions, concludes with the following remarkable observation. "After all, I never saw, and "never heard of the king committing any outrageous act of violence, unauthorized by a public procedure, against any person "not in the class of courtiers, or public officers of government.

* Chardin (Vol. V. page 219,) informs us, that a person often exclaims, when speaking of another who is oppressive, *Pâdshâee mekunnud,* which signifies, "He acts "the king:" and if they experience violence from any one, they exclaim, *Mugur pâdshâee tou,* "Perhaps thou art a king:" and again, when complaining of the tyranny of another individual, they say, *Pâdshâee ba mun-kurdâ-ust,* that is, "He acted the king "with me." All these expressions merely mean, that the person of whom they were made, assumed a power which did not belong to him.

CHAP. XXIII "With respect to the latter," he very truly states, "that the danger "they incur does not diminish their solicitude for employment. "They listen attentively," he adds, "to the accounts they hear of "those countries where life and property are secure; but the impres-"sion made upon their minds is of the same character as that which "most men receive when told of the joys of the other world. It is "unaccompanied by any desire to leave that which they inhabit*." This writer also observes, and with truth, that in a government like Persia it would be impossible to adopt any other than the most prompt and vigorous measures when a great offender is concerned. It is, indeed, obvious, that a noble of rank, (particularly the chief of a tribe,) would almost always have the means of escaping punishment: and the monarch is forced, therefore, to proceed with caution, lest, in the attempt to destroy a guilty individual, he should hazard his own safety, or the peace of the country. It is, from these causes, that marks of favour and honorary dresses not unusually precede disgrace and death. The victim is decorated for the sacrifice; and the dagger of assassination is employed to perform the office of the sword of justice.

The actual power of the Monarch of Persia depends upon the condition of his empire; and as that is continually fluctuating, it is impossible to do more than to offer some general observations on the limits fixed to it by usage, and to state what the king himself recognises as the bounds of his own authority, and what is generally believed he cannot overstep without danger of serious discontent and tumult, if not of general rebellion.

* Chardin, Vol. V. page 231, 232.

The king claims, as has been before stated, the right of judging upon all occasions the conduct of his ministers, officers, and servants, and of fining, disgracing, plundering, or putting them to death, at pleasure: but even this admitted power, which is always considerably checked by public opinion, does not extend to any interference with their religion; nor is he considered to have a right to seize, or to confiscate, any personal property belonging to them which their family possessed before they entered his service, and which is guarded by legal titles, and has either been granted or purchased by them or their ancestors. This species of property is deemed under the peculiar protection of the Sherrâh, or "written law;" and a violent seizure of it would be considered as a most tyrannical outrage. It, however, continually occurs, that when the king imposes a heavy fine upon a minister or governor of a province, whom he deems a public delinquent, he adopts rigorous measures to enforce payment, till he compels him to sell his estates, and government is usually the purchaser: but the very observance of this form, in cases where the individual is one of that class whose persons and property are admitted to be at the mercy of the monarch, is the strongest of all proofs of that respect in which this kind of property is held. It is owing to the violent revolutions to which Persia has been lately exposed, that so many estates have been forfeited by the flight or extinction of the families by whom they were possessed: but there are still numbers of this class who can boast the enjoyment of lands* that have for centuries belonged to their ancestors.

* I was told by Meerza Buzoorg, the prime minister of the Prince Abbas Meerza, that his personal estate had been in his family several centuries; and many of the

CHAP. XXIII. The conduct of the Monarchs of Persia to the ecclesiastical order has, with very few exceptions, been always the same. This class is, in a great degree, exempt from that tyranny which oppresses others: and the land which has been granted by government, or by individuals, for the support of mosques, colleges, and tombs, is deemed sacred, and can neither be alienated nor seized. It is true that Nâdir Shah secularized almost the whole of this property; but this measure was deemed not only indefensible, but sacrilegious: and we have not in Persian history another example of so violent an act of authority. If the sovereign be restrained, by a sense of the religion he professes, and a deference for the general feeling of those whom he governs, from oppressing the religious order, he is no less prevented by usage, and the apprehension of exciting secret discontent or open revolt, from interfering with the established customs of the military tribes of his dominions: and even the civil branches of the population of Persia may, unless in cases of insurrection, be pronounced as exempt from suffering, in a direct manner, from the tyrannical exercise of the personal authority of the monarch of that country. Their lives and property are generally secure, unless under the sentence of the law: and though their judges and magistrates can impose fines, inflict corporal punishment, and sentence to death, they have no power of directing landed property of inheritance to be seized or alienated, unless for the satisfaction of creditors: and we cannot have a better proof of the security of private estates, than a

ancestors of this minister enjoyed high station. I have known several persons of less note, who assured me, that they inherited lands which had been for an equally long time possessed by their forefathers.

knowledge that, during the latter years of the Suffavean dynasty, land sold for twenty-five and thirty years' purchase; and that all the late revolutions which have afflicted Persia, and the heavy imposts that have been laid upon the inhabitants of that country, have never reduced it below one half of its former value*.

The king nominates whomsoever he pleases to be governors of provinces and principal collectors of the revenue: but a military tribe will only obey a leader who belongs to the family of their chiefs; and the king is not always able to interrupt the regular succession. When he appoints, or, more properly speaking, supports a chief who is disagreeable to the tribe, their violent discontent and insubordination often compel him to revoke the measure he has adopted. The principal magistrates of cities, who act under the governor, and those appointed to preside over different wards, must, as has been before stated, not only be natives of the city, but persons who are agreeable to the majority of the inhabitants. These officers, therefore, and the magistrates of towns and of villages, may almost be said to be elective. The effect of this system is to render the situation of the magistrate of a town like that of the chief of a tribe; and we often find that it is hereditary in a particular family. A magistrate so chosen may occasionally bend before a storm he cannot resist, and become an instrument of tyranny and oppression; but all his natural feelings, and the interest of himself and his successors, must dispose him to use what power he has for the protection of his fellow-citizens: and the custom, therefore, which

* About ten years ago, land in the vicinity of Shiraz was sold at twelve years' purchase, which was deemed a very low price.

CHAP. XXIII grants to the inhabitants of Persia this right of influencing the nomination of their immediate superiors, is very effective in preserving them from some of the worst evils of a despotic rule. This privilege, as has been mentioned, is extended to all the principal tradesmen and artisans of Persia. In every great city each class has its head, whom the general voice has raised to that condition; and through this person all particular imposts laid upon the trade, or manufacture, to which the party belongs, are paid, while all grievances are represented through the same channel.

There is no country in which men enjoy more personal freedom in regard to their place of residence than in Persia. All ranks, except those in the public service, or slaves, (who are not numerous,) may go where they choose within the kingdom, or leave it whenever they desire to do so. There is no passport required: the government never offer any obstruction to an individual following his own inclination in this particular; and the facility * with which men can remove from the effects of tyranny, may be deemed one of their securities against its oppression.

We have already stated, that the confusion which prevails in Persia, between the courts of Sherrâh and Urf, or "written and "customary law," has been purposely promoted, not only by the monarch, but by all those who enjoy power. It is a great source of illicit emolument: for in cases of dispute, (except on points expressly limited to the decision of the written law,) the favour

* There are some exceptions to this rule. The male Armenians in Persia may leave that kingdom, but they cannot remove the females of their family without a passport, which is seldom obtained but with great trouble and expense.

of the king, or of those civil or military officers who are vested with his authority, is essential; and it is generally sought by the most corrupt means. It is quite impossible to define the exact nature of a system which varies with the character of the chief ruler, and of those whom he employs, and which is more or less oppressive, as he is moderate and just, or venal and rapacious. In a country where the law, as it is termed, is administered in so summary a manner, and where decisions are given at the moment, and upon a hurried examination of facts, men with the best intentions may often pronounce an unjust sentence: and those who desire to screen guilt, or to punish innocence, have the easy means of doing so under the form of justice. The principal check upon the conduct of subordinate governors is an appeal to the throne, which those whom they oppress can always make, as no person can prevent an individual in Persia from seeking that relief; and when he reaches court, he is certain of attention; for supposing even that there is no disposition to redress the injured, it is by an accumulation of these complaints against the governors of provinces and cities, that the king and his ministers furnish themselves with matter of accusation, which either affords a pretext of removing and plundering the party accused, or of compelling him to share with them the spoils he has obtained by the abuse of his power. It is impossible for the most virtuous public officer to guard against these accusations, which are often brought forward by the intriguing efforts of his enemies: and when the court is corrupt, innocence is no security. Men in high station, therefore, may be said to be compelled to violence and extortion by the character of the system. They must provide themselves with the only means by which they

CHAP. XXIII. can satisfy the cupidity of their superiors, and save themselves from disgrace and punishment.

The same species of corruption which prevails in the judicial administration, pervades that of the collection of the revenue: but oppression in this branch is attended with more difficulty; as it is not unusual for whole villages and districts to rise against it; and when the distance prevents their going in a body to the capital, they send deputies. This proceeding is seldom adopted with a hope of obtaining redress, but it is almost certain to stop the progress of abuse; for no person, unless very powerfully supported, dare continue to oppress those who have carried their complaints before the king.

The situation of the public officers in Persia, from the highest to the lowest rank, appears precarious, and full of anxiety and danger; yet there is no country in which employment is more eagerly sought. It always gives consequence, and sometimes wealth; and all who attain it seem desirous of grasping as much as they can without a very flagrant violation of law and justice. The higher ranks are in some degree restrained by a regard for that popularity which gives them strength; and the lower, by a fear of the punishment which follows detection and exposure. The situation of the petty magistrates and collectors of districts*, between rapacious and violent superiors, who desire to exact more than the revenue, and a rude and turbulent populace, who are reluctant to pay even just

* Every province in Persia is divided into bâllooks, or districts, to each of which there is a separate zaubit, or manager, whose duty usually combines that of magistrate and collector.

dues, must, however, be very miserable. A few years ago, when the prince, who is governor general of Fars, called upon the officers of his court to know what punishment he should inflict upon a very notorious thief, who had just been seized; "Make "him," said a noble, whom age and the loss of his sight had privileged to speak his sentiments with freedom, "the manager "of a district in Fars. I can conceive no crime," he added, "for "which such an appointment would not be an adequate punish-"ment."

The despotic and venal system of government which has long prevailed in Persia has not subdued the spirit of the natives of that kingdom; nor has it impoverished them in that degree which might have been expected. The ministers and chief nobles appear to be in the enjoyment of affluence; and all persons in the public service seem to have ample means of supporting themselves and their families. Some of the merchants and principal inhabitants of towns are possessed of considerable property; and among the other classes of the people, though few are rich, there seem to be hardly any in actual want *. The latter may, in a considerable degree, owe this exemption from penury to their fine climate and productive soil, and to their industry and frugal habits: but in Persia, as in other countries, falsehood and deceit keep pace with tyranny and injustice: and the abuses of the government, and the constant changes to which it is exposed, appear to have more effect upon the moral than on the physical condition of the people. In Persia

* I should pronounce, as far as my own observation went, that there are fewer mendicants in Persia than in any country I ever saw.

CHAP. XXIII every man complains of his poverty, and of the violence of the government; but this complaint as often proceeds from a desire to avoid oppression, as from its actual pressure. The system is bad, and those who suffer from it, naturally hate the persons by whom it is administered; and to this feeling, which is destructive of all social ties between the rulers and those whom they govern, we may, in a great degree, attribute the constant recurrence of those internal troubles in Persia, which have for so long a period exposed that country to a succession of civil wars and revolutions.

The character of the persons intrusted with the government of provinces, must always have a considerable influence on the happiness and prosperity of the people. The Satraps of ancient Persia appear to have had the same power as the Beglerbegs of modern times. The Caliphs, while they held that kingdom, divided it among military leaders; and the conquerors from Tartary, who established their sovereignty over it, pursued the same system, but employed the princes of their own families in these high stations. Some of the Suffavean kings adopted this policy: but the last monarchs of that race confined their sons to the haram, as is the modern usage of Turkey; and, with the hope of increasing their revenue, and of preventing rebellion, they nominated men of low birth and civil pursuits to the office of superintendants or farmers of provinces: the consequence has been shown; tranquillity was obtained, but the empire weakened. Nâdir Shah, and his immediate successors, employed military chiefs in all the principal governments; and the reigning monarch has divided almost the whole of Persia among his sons: but he places with these princes viziers or ministers, whom he considers in a great degree responsible for the internal

government of the province. In some cases, a separate person is appointed superintendant of the revenue, and there is almost always an officer nominated by the crown to command the troops *. It appears very difficult to pronounce on the merits of these opposite systems: that now pursued is certainly the most generous; but, though the conduct of royal governors, who desire to attach those under their rule, and who are above being the mere purveyors of an avaricious court, may give present prosperity to the kingdom, the extent of future danger cannot be concealed. On the occurrence of an accident to their common parent, whom they obey from habit and from duty, their condition becomes critical, if not desperate; and submission, even to an elder brother, is no security against their continuing an object of his suspicion. In such circumstances, rebellion, or flight from the kingdom, present the only roads to safety; and the latter is not likely to be contemplated till all hopes are abandoned of the former being successful.

Army of Persia.

We shall conclude this Chapter, upon the Government of Persia, by a short view of the army of that state, which comprises a considerable body of irregular horse, furnished by the military tribes of the country, and commanded by their own chiefs; a numerous irregular militia, raised and supported by the provinces and principal

* When I first visited Shiraz, in 1800, the Prince Hussun Aly Meerza was governor general of Fars; Cherâgh Aly Khan was his vizier; Meerza Mahomed Khan, the son of Hajee Ibrahim, was the superintendant of revenue; and Nâsser-ullah Khan Karagoozaloo was commander of the forces. When I was there in 1810 the prince continued governor general; but Mahomed Nubbee Khan held both the office of vizier and superintendant of revenue. Sâduck Khan, a military chief, of the Kujur tribe, commanded the troops.

CHAP. XXIII. cities of the empire; and a corps of infantry and artillery, clothed and disciplined in the European manner.

The irregular horse of modern Persia are the same kind of troops which opposed the Romans; and they have preserved not only the habits, but the mode of fighting, of their forefathers *. As the men are robust and brave, and their horses active and strong, there cannot be a cavalry more suited for all the purposes of predatory warfare. The Persians assert, that their monarch can command a body of eighty thousand of this description of troops, who perform military service in return for grants of land, and liberty of pasture. Every chief of a tribe is obliged to furnish a quota †, proportionate to the numbers of his followers. Each horseman ‡ receives provisions for himself and horse, when employed, and a small annual pay ||.

* The Persians now, it is true, use a carbine instead of a bow; but, like their Parthian ancestors, they take their aim at their enemy when apparently flying from his attack.

† Horsemen are furnished in other modes. I find it stated in one MS. that the possessor of every water-mill in Persia was obliged to contribute a man, mounted and equipped for public service. I am not certain that this usage still exists; but it is not more than six years ago since it was stated, by a Persian nobleman in high public employ, to be one of the resources of the country: it is probable, therefore, that the obligation is recognized, and that when the horseman is not required, the owner of the mill pays a sum of money to government. It is a remarkable fact, that a usage similar to the above mentioned, prevails over many parts of Turkey.

‡ The horsemen are furnished by the families of a tribe, according to established custom. Sometimes one family furnishes several horsemen, at others only one; and two or three small families are often charged with the support of only one mounted soldier. It is common to find substitutes, where there is no youth in the family fit for the service.

|| This seldom exceeds five or six tomâns per annum, and is paid by an assignment

This class of the army, unless there be a prospect of plunder, or their own chief is in command, give their services very reluctantly. They are only obliged to attend a few months in the year; and, if not engaged in active hostilities, always return home during the winter. CHAP. XXIII

The Monarch of Persia has constantly near his person a body of horse, which are termed, as a distinction, his slaves, or royal guards. This favourite corps, which at present does not exceed three or four thousand men, is formed promiscuously from Georgian slaves, and the sons of the first nobles of Persia. They are well mounted, and well armed, at the public expense; and their pay* is not only better than that of the other troops, but they are employed on every service that is likely to add to their income†.

Almost all the population of Persia are armed; and there is a militia in every part of the country, which is equally formed from

on the revenue, which the persons who receive it sometimes discount at a considerable loss. Each horseman has also an annual allowance of two ass loads of grain. The officers of this body have a larger pay than the men; but few receive more than fifteen or twenty tomâns per annum, and four or five ass loads of grain. The ass load, it has been before mentioned, is computed at 700lbs.; and the regulated value, if government pay it in money, is one tomân.

* They receive from twenty to thirty tomâns per annum: and as this is usually given in an assignment upon the revenue, and they are allowed to go personally to receive it, they almost always exact more than their due. This is not difficult; for the very name of Gholam Shah, or "one of the king's personal guards," throws a village, or district, into alarm.

† Each of the princes of the blood that is employed in a separate government has a small body of Gholams, or "personal guards," who are upon the same footing, in regard to their pay, equipments, and employment, as those of the king.

CHAP. XXIII men of wandering tribes, and the inhabitants of cities and villages. The usual duties of this militia are to defend their homes, and to aid the police. They are maintained by the province, town, or village, to which they belong; and are liable to be called out on any emergency: but when employed with the army, or in distant garrisons, they receive pay from government*. The number of this registered militia is stated to exceed one hundred and fifty thousand men. They provide their own clothing and arms. The former is the common dress of the country to which they belong: the latter usually consist of a matchlock, sabre, and dagger. The militia has no further discipline than that of obeying their own officers: and neither the men of this class, nor the irregular horse, will submit to be commanded by any but those of their own body, whom they deem their superiors.

Before the reign of Shah Abbas the Great, the only army of Persia was the irregular horse, and the common infantry, or militia of the country. That monarch, with the desire of opposing the Turkish janizaries, and from a wish to check the overgrown power of the khans, or chiefs of tribes, formed a corps of twelve thousand infantry, and a rude park of artillery. He also raised a body of twelve thousand horse, which were commanded by the favourite officers of court. Through the aid of this force of infantry and cavalry, who were indiscriminately formed from men of military tribes and Georgian slaves, and who were entirely dependent upon the monarch, Abbas, and his immediate successors, were able to keep in check, and ulti-

* Their pay, when employed, is from five to seven tomâns per annum, and from two to three ass loads of grain.

mately to destroy the power of the great khans, or chiefs of military tribes, whose followers had before constituted the whole force of the kingdom, and who were first reduced to thirty thousand men, and ultimately so broken and discouraged, that they ceased to be formidable either to the monarch of the country, or his enemies. The spirit and strength of this branch of the army of Persia has been revived by those scenes of turbulence and war with which that country has been afflicted during the last century; and the army of Aga Mahomed Khan consisted of irregular horse and infantry, a few unwieldy pieces of cannon, and a number of zumbooruks*, or camel swivels: but the present monarch has, with a view of opposing the Russians, and of strengthening his internal government, formed a body of regular infantry and artillery †, which already CHAP. XXIII

* This name is derived from zumboor, or "wasp." The terminating k marks the diminutive, and these swivels may be called little wasps.

† The disciplined infantry of Persia consists of two great divisions, called the Surbâz, or "the resolute," and Jânbâz, or "the contemners of life." The former, which consists of twelve corps of one thousand men each, has been raised and is maintained by the Prince Abbas Meerza, the heir apparent. This division is composed of men of particular tribes and districts. There are two regiments of the tribe of Affshâr, two of that of Shakâkee, two of Mârândee, one of the inhabitants of Erivân, one of those of Tabreez and its vicinity, one of Kârâdâghee, one of Kangooloo, one of Mookuddum, and one of Dumbâlloo. All the men of whom this division is formed are natives of the province of Aderbijan, which is under the immediate government of their royal commander. The Prince Abbas Meerza has also raised a regular brigade of cavalry, consisting of twelve hundred men, and a corps of horse artillery of sufficient strength to man twenty field pieces. Both these corps are formed of men from the different military tribes. The whole of this body of troops was first disciplined by French officers, and afterwards by English. It has, however, chiefly owed the efficiency it has attained to the character of Abbas Meerza, who has laboured to

CHAP. XXIII. amount to twenty thousand men: and part of this new body of troops, who have been latterly trained by English officers, are clothed, armed, and paid by government, and established on a footing quite distinct from the militia of the country.

There is no subject of such essential importance to any country as the constitution of that army which is to preserve its national independence. It appears evident that the military force of a kingdom must be of a character congenial with that of the government, or it cannot be efficient for its defence. A barbarous despotism is always in danger of perishing by the means by which it was

assimilate it, both in appearance and equipments, to the regular armies of Europe. The pay of the troops of which it is composed is superior to that of any other class of troops in Persia. The pay of the officers is from forty to five hundred tomâns per annum; and the common soldiers receive ten tomâns, besides certain articles of dress, and rations when on service. The different regiments of which this force is composed are willing to be commanded by European officers, but are reluctant to grant the same obedience to Persian superiors of a different tribe. It has, however, been the policy of Abbas Meerza to subdue this spirit; and he has placed some of his favourite officers in charge of corps formed of tribes to which they do not belong. As an additional encouragement to this new branch of the Persian army, crown lands have been granted to the soldiers who serve in it, on more favourable terms than they are given to any other tenants.

The Jânbâz, who are more immediately attached to the king, are nominally of an equal number with the Surbâz, but their real strength is not computed at more than eight or nine thousand men. This body of troops is neither so well paid, clothed, nor disciplined, as that under the prince. They are formed, in the same manner, of distinct tribes. Among these are two regiments of Bukhteeârees: and it is a remarkable fact, that these rude mountaineers have been reported, by the English officer who was employed to discipline them, as more tractable and intelligent than any other corps in the service.

created, and is supported: and the very violence which it must use to preserve its existence, has the effect of keeping its subjects in a rude state; for they will neither labour to produce that which force may wrest from them, nor abandon any of those defences which their personal habits, their social union, or their local situation, afford them, as a shield against the violence of tyrannical power. In civilized communities, military tribes cannot be allowed to exist, as they are constituted upon principles at variance with such an order of society. In such, therefore, the army of the state is indiscriminately formed from all ranks of its subjects; and the force of example, and the severity of discipline, supply the want of those habits and sentiments which give energy and force to the warlike inhabitants of a ruder government: but it is one consequence of this condition, that a nation almost entirely intrusts its safety to its army. If that be conquered, it falls; for the remainder of the people cannot become soldiers in a day; and they are, from their occupations and peaceable habits, incapable of that irregular, but effective resistance, which a population of a different character continue to offer to invaders, long after their armies have been defeated, and their cities taken.

It continually occurs, that the despotic monarchs of uncivilized countries desire to have all the advantages of those permanent establishments, which give prosperity and strength to a well-regulated government, and hope to attain these, particularly a disciplined army, without any sacrifice of their absolute power. These efforts to obtain objects which are incompatible, may succeed so far, as to add, for the moment, to the internal tranquillity of the country, by checking or subduing the turbulent spirit and ambition of feudatory lords, and

CHAP. XXIII. their warlike followers: but a total change of the government itself must take place, before the new system of defence can operate, further than to paralyze the old. An army cannot possibly be maintained in a state of discipline and efficiency, for any length of time, unless its pay be regular, and all its equipments complete: and this can never be the case, except in a state where the succession to the throne is settled, where the great majority of the population are of peaceable habits, and where establishments are permanent, and the laws respected, and administered upon principles which are understood, and not liable to be altered at the will of the sovereign, and of those to whom he delegates his authority. That a regular army may be instrumental, by the influence of its example, and habits of order, in promoting civilisation, there can be no doubt; but this change must coincide with many other reforms, or every effort to render it effectual to the great object of national defence will prove abortive, and terminate in disappointment.

The reigning Monarch of Persia has been disposed to try this system by an observation of the advantages which the Russians derived from their discipline, and a belief that his subjects, if clothed, armed, and trained in the same manner, would be more equal to a contest with that nation; and he has probably seen with satisfaction, the growth of a force, which is also calculated, from its formation, to increase his power over the more turbulent part of his own subjects: but it is perhaps fortunate for his kingdom, that this plan has not yet proceeded to an extent that can have seriously injured either the feelings or the efficiency of that irregular army, to which Persia must (while her government remains unaltered,) trust principally for her defence against the attack

of any European power. The means which this nation possesses to resist such an attack are far from inconsiderable; but they are of a character which would not be improved by the partial introduction of a new military system. They consist chiefly of natural obstacles, which nothing but a long period of time, and many radical changes, could overcome. The great proportion of the inhabitants of this kingdom must be civilized before they could be subdued. Neither the soil, nor the productions of the country, are of a nature to invite conquest: and its internal condition, connected with its relative position to the most warlike and barbarous of all the nations of Asia, would place the European state, which attempted that project, in a situation of more difficulty and embarrassment on the day that it was apparently accomplished, than on that on which it was commenced.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Observations upon the Climate, Productions, and Population, of Persia, with some Remarks on the Appearance of its Cities and Villages, and a short Notice of the Progress which the Inhabitants of that Country have made in the Study of the Sciences, Fine Arts, and general Literature.

CHAP. XXIV

After the full account that has been given of the religion of Persia, and the mode of the administration of that kingdom, it will be useful, before we proceed to a consideration of the manners and usages of its inhabitants, to offer some general observations upon its climate and productions; the amount of its population; the style and appearance of its cities, towns, and villages; and the progress which the natives of this celebrated country have made in the useful and fine arts: but it is only meant to take a very concise view of subjects which have been already exhausted by the labours of able and scientific travellers.

Climate of Persia.

Persia, now that Georgia is separated from that kingdom, may be said to extend from the twenty-sixth to the fortieth degree of north latitude, and from the forty-fifth to the sixty-first degree of east longitude. There is, perhaps, no region in the universe of its extent which has a greater diversity of climate. This difference of temperature, however, appears to be more dependent upon elevation and soil, than upon distance from the equator. In the southern part

of this kingdom, which includes those districts of the provinces of Kerman, Lâristan, Fars, and Khuzistan, that lie between the mountains and the shores of the Persian Gulf, the heat* in summer is very great; and it is increased by those sandy and barren plains with which this tract abounds, and which present to the eye of the traveller nearly the same prospects as those of Arabia.

* The following table of the mean temperature of Abusheher, which lies about the centre of this tract, is taken from observations made by Mr. Jukes in 1803.

MONTH.	TEMPERATURE.			REMARKS.
	Sun-rise.	Two P. M	Nine P. M.	
January	58	65	62	Prevailing winds northerly; violent thunder and lightning on the 19th; little rain fell during this month; distant mountains white with snow.
February	62	66	63	An unusual quantity of rain fell this month; very tempestuous weather, with southerly winds.
March	65½	69	67½	Pleasant weather; a good deal of rain.
April	72	76½	73¾	Pleasant weather; northerly wind prevailing.
May	80½	85½	82½	Distant mountains no longer covered with snow; on the 31st the thermometer rose to 110, in a tent, with a fly. Some rain fell in this month, and we had thunder and lightning.
June	86½	93	88½	No rain; prevailing winds W. N. W.; light breezes beginning to blow from the land during the night.
July	89½	98	93	No rain; partly regular land winds after nine P. M. till morning; prevailing winds northerly; dews at night towards the end of the month.
October	85	100	89	No rain; north-west winds prevailing; dews at night; thermometer, one day in tents, up at 115, with a south-east wind; exceedingly oppressive weather.
Septem.	82½	95	86½	No rain; heavy dews; north-west winds prevailing.
October	75½	87¼	78	A very little rain on the 12th; mornings and evenings, at the end of the month, pleasant; winds variable, chiefly northerly.
Novem.	63	75	68	Stormy, with thunder, lightning, and rain, during this month; distant mountains seen covered with snow; at the end of the month pleasant weather.
Decem.	54	65½	63	South-easterly winds, and sometimes violent; the weather, however, usually very pleasant.

Mr. Jukes states, that he made observations on the climate of Abusheher in succeeding years, and found them nearly correspond with the above.

CHAP. XXIV

The hot winds, which are known under the name of Summoom in Asia, and Sirocco in Europe, are neither frequent nor attended with danger in this region, which is probably owing to the narrowness of the space between the sea and the mountains. During the two first months of summer a strong north-westerly wind prevails over the whole of this tract, which, at times, blows with such violence that it brings with it clouds of a light, impalpable sand, from the opposite shore of Arabia, a distance of more than two degrees. In the autumn the heats are more oppressive than in summer; but in winter and spring the climate is delightful. It is never very cold, and snow seldom falls on the southern side of that range of mountains by which it is divided from the other parts of Persia. The rains in this quarter, which are not heavy, fall in the winter, or early in spring. The prevailing winds are from the north-west and south-east; and rain is almost always accompanied by the latter, which, though often very violent, hardly ever continues above three or four days at one period. Some parts of the interior of the provinces of Kerman and Lâristan are subject to extreme heats, particularly those districts of the latter which border upon the Desert of Seistan.

The town and district of Shiraz, and the other parts of Fars above the mountains, enjoy a fine climate, and are neither subject to the oppressive heats of the lower and more southern parts of Persia, nor to that severity of cold which is experienced in the more elevated and northern provinces of that kingdom *. The

* The summer at Shiraz is warm, but the heat is never excessive; and the nights, during the warmest weather, are cool and pleasant. When I was there in 1800,

temperature of this part of Fars varies according to the elevation of the different vallies with which it is interspersed; but neither the heat nor the cold is excessive.

The soil of the interior part of Fars is in general rich and productive. There are few large streams, but abundance of rivulets; and while its more mountainous districts afford excellent pasture for the flocks of those tribes by which they are inhabited, the vallies near Shiraz, and the other towns of the province, produce almost every kind of grain and of fruit in the greatest abundance.

As we proceed northward into the extensive province of Irak, the climate improves; and Isfahan, once the capital, and still the principal city of that kingdom, appears to be placed in the happiest temperature* that Persia can boast. Its inhabitants are strangers to that heat which is felt, during some of the summer months, at Shiraz; yet their winter is hardly more severe. Excepting a few weeks in the year, the sky of this favoured region is unclouded and serene. The rains are never heavy, and the snow seldom lies long upon the ground. The air is so pure and dry, that the brightest polished metal may be exposed to it without being

in one of the hottest days of June, Fahrenheit's thermometer was at noon 94°, in the house, and 100° in a tent. In May, 1810, it never rose at noon above 88°, nor was below 74°. In the morning, at eight o'clock, it generally stood about 60°. In autumn the heat continued; but in winter it became cold, the thermometer falling considerably below the freezing point. As late as March there was often a hoar frost upon the ground. April is a delightful month, the thermometer at sunrise being generally from 50° to 55°, at two p. m. 80° to 84°, and at nine p. m. about 64°.

* Mr. Jukes states, that "from the average of twenty-seven days, including the end "of May and the beginning of June, the thermometer, at sunrise, was 56°, at two p. m. 87°, and at nine p. m. 67°.

CHAP. XXIV corroded by rust. The regularity of the seasons in this part of Persia appears quite extraordinary to a person accustomed to a more uncertain and variable climate; for they perceptibly change almost to the hour. When spring commences, there is, perhaps, no spot in the world where Nature assumes a more lovely garb than at Isfahan: the clearness of its streams, the shade of its lofty avenues, the fragrant luxuriance of gardens, and the verdant beauty of wide-spreading fields, combine with the finest climate to render it delightful: and we are almost disposed, when we view this enchanting scene, to admit, that the hyperbole is not excessive which describes it as having an intoxicating effect upon the senses*.

The northern cities of Irak do not enjoy so favourable a climate as Isfahan. The country about Hamadan is very mountainous, and

* The Persians have at all times boasted of the climate of this capital. A merchant of that nation, who had travelled to every quarter, was residing at Delhi: and we are informed, that on being asked by the Emperor of India which he thought the best spot in the world, he answered, without hesitation, "My own house."—"Your own house!" replied the emperor, disappointed at not receiving that flattery which he had anticipated.—"Yes, please your majesty," was the reply; "and I trust I shall prove it to "your satisfaction. You will allow," he continued, "that the fourth climate[7] is the "finest on the earth."—"I do," said the emperor.—"The province of Irak is admit-"ted, I believe, to be the finest in that climate, and Isfahan is the first city in Irak. "Now," said he, "Saadut-abad is undoubtedly superior to every other ward in Isfahan, "and my house is the best in Saadut-abad." The emperor smiled, and approved both of his logic and his patriotism.

[7] By the geography of the ancients, which is the only system known in Persia, the habitable earth is divided into seven climates.

the winter severe; while the Cities of Kashan* and Koom, which are situated on the verge of deserts, are exposed almost to as oppressive heat in summer, as the countries on the shores of the Gulf. Teheran†, the residence of the king, which lies immediately under those ranges of mountains that divide Irak from Mazenderan, is exposed to great vicissitudes of climate, and is not deemed salubrious.

In Aderbijan, the summer is warm, and the winter‡ very severe: and in parts of Kurdistan, though situated more to the southward, so

* The extraordinary difference of climate between this city and the neighbouring high Valley of Kohrood has been already noticed.—Vide Vol. I. page 4.

† The mean temperature of Teheran in the month of April, as taken by Fahrenheit's thermometer, was 66° at noon. In May, the thermometer was, in the morning, 67°; at two p. m. 76°; and at ten p. m. 72°: but the summer, at the capital, is subject to excessive heats; and the winter is very cold. The climate of this city, however, and its neighbourhood, is subject to more sudden changes than any other part of Persia. When encamped at Dhaung, about sixty-eight miles from Teheran, on the thirteenth of June, 1810, Fahrenheit's thermometer, which had been at noon 92°, fell at three p. m. to 60°; and at eight p. m., when on the march to Sugzeeâbâd, the wind set in from the north-west, and it suddenly became as cold as in winter. The difference of the thermometer from noon to twelve at night was about sixty degrees. The north-west wind which had caused this great change, is sometimes called Baud-e-Shaheryâr, but oftener Baud-e-Caucâsân, or "the wind from Caucâsân," a mountainous district immediately to the north of Kazveen. This wind is common in winter, but not in summer; and a storm of the kind we experienced, when it lasts any time, destroys all the fruit, and does great injury to the crops of grain.

‡ Tabreez, the capital of this province, lies in north latitude 38° 10′. When encamped near this city in June 1810, we found the thermometer sometimes 68° at sunrise, 94° at two p. m., and 56° at ten p. m. The wind, at this season, blew strong from the eastward. The following account of the climate of this city is taken from a journal kept by Mr. Campbell who remained there during the winter of 1808.

CHAP. XXIV great is the effect of elevation, that the winter may be said to commence with the autumn* of the surrounding country.

The northern provinces of Persia, Ghilan and Mazenderan, have, like its southern, a cold and a warm region. The former is the higher or mountainous part, which borders on Irak and Aderbijan; and the latter, those plains that stretch along the shores of the Caspian. Both these provinces abound in forests and rivers, which may be said to be rare in almost every other part of Persia. Silk is cultivated in Ghilan, and in some parts of Mazenderan; but the latter country is most celebrated for its culture of rice, which is of very superior quality; and its producing this grain in such abundance, is a proof that its soil and climate are essentially different

"On the twentieth of October we had a heavy fall of snow, which covered all the "surrounding country; but it did not remain long upon the ground, for the weather "again became mild, and we had no excessive cold until the middle of December: from "which period, till the end of January, the thermometer, when exposed to the air at "night, never rose above the zero; and in our rooms, at mid-day, it seldom rose above "18°. January was by far the coldest month. The water became almost instanta-"neously solid in the tumblers upon the dining table. The ink was constantly frozen "in our inkstands, although the tables were quite close to the fire. For at least a "fortnight not an egg was to be had, all being split by the cold. Some bottles of "wine froze, although covered with straw; and many of the copper ewers were split by "the expansion of the water when frozen in them. Towards the end of February "the weather became comparatively mild; but on the first of May we had a fall of "snow, and such cold weather, that it destroyed all the vegetation: afterwards the "weather became very warm, and they began to cut their corn on the fifteenth of "July."

* I have before stated, (Vol. I. page 5,) that when encamped on the Plain of Hubatoo in Kurdistan, on the seventeenth of August 1810, the water froze, and the thermometer was thirty-eight degrees at sunrise. This plain is in latitude 36° north.

from that of the other parts of Persia. The rains in both it and Ghilan are frequent and heavy, and many tracts of the lower country are described as very moist and unhealthy. CHAP. XXIV

The great province, or kingdom, as it is often termed, of Khorassan, has within itself every variety of climate: but all those districts which border upon the desert that stretches from Irak to Seistan are arid, and subject to extreme heats: and in some parts the inhabitants are, during a few weeks in summer, compelled to avoid exposure, lest they should be destroyed by the pestilential winds, or buried in the clouds of sand*, with which they are often

* Captain Pottinger, who, in the beginning of April 1810, in his journey from India to Persia passed over a part of the desert which stretches into Baloochistan, has the following interesting observation upon the subject.

" The soil (if such it may be called,) is a very light red sand; the particles of which, " when taken in the hand, are scarcely more than palpable: the whole is thrown (most " likely by winds,) into a confused mass of waves of different dimensions, principally " running from east to west. Many of these are very remarkable in their formation. " On the opposite side to that on which the wind blows, where they often rise in nearly " a perpendicular line to a very considerable height, they have, at a distance, the appear- " ance of a new brick-wall: the side, towards the point from which the wind usually " blows, (N. W.) slopes off with a gradual declivity to the base (or near it,) of the next " or preceding wave, which rises in the same extraordinary manner, so as to leave a " hollow or path between them, the waves which it separates varying in height above " it from ten to twenty feet on each side.

" I had considerable difficulty and fatigue," Captain Pottinger continues, " in get- " ting my camels over these waves, especially where we had to ascend the perpendicular " or leeward side of them: indeed, in several instances, we were obliged to desist from " the attempt, and go round until a more favourable place or turn in the wave offered. " On the sloping or windward side the camels got up pretty well; and as soon as they " found the top of the wave giving way with their weight, (which it invariably did if

CHAP. XXIV accompanied: but, notwithstanding this partial evil, Khorassan may be said to possess a fine and salubrious climate.

From what has been stated, we may pronounce, that, with the exception of the provinces on the shore of the Caspian, the climate of Persia, though very various, has every where the same quality of dryness, and purity of atmosphere. It has been before mentioned*, that this kingdom has hardly any great rivers, and does not abound in lesser streams, or springs. The consequence is, that it has few trees, excepting those which are cultivated. It, perhaps, owes some

" of any size,) they dropt on their knees, and in that manner gradually descended with " the sand, which was, luckily for us, so light and loose, that the first camel made a " sufficient path for the others to follow without difficulty. This impediment, however " annoying, was nothing to the distress suffered, not only by myself and people, but " the camels, from the floating or moving particles of sand; a circumstance which I " am quite at a loss to account for. On the first appearance of it, the desert seemed, " at a distance of half a mile, or even less, to be a flat plain from six inches to a foot " higher than the summit of the waves. This vapour, or cloud, appeared constantly to " recede as we advanced, and at times was formed completely round us, conveying a " most distressing sensation; and at the same time we were imperceptibly covered " with small sand, which, getting into our eyes, mouths, and nostrils, caused consider- " able irritation, and was accompanied by severe thirst, which was greatly increased by " the intense heat of the vertical sun, by which the sand was so heated as to blister " our feet, (being obliged to walk,) though we had shoes on. On inquiry, my guide " said, that it was supposed, by those who had seen these floating sands, that the violent " heat caused the particles to rise, and that they, consequently, moved through the " atmosphere: but as it was perfectly still, as far as I could judge, I am in doubts " respecting the correctness of the guide's ideas on the subject, although I certainly " remarked that this phenomenon was more common during the heat of the day, than " either in the morning or evening; so much so indeed, that I cannot say I ever saw it " at either of the latter periods."

* Vide Vol. I. page 5.

of its salubrity to this cause, as it is more free than other regions of Asia from those vapours and exhalations which, though they fructify the soil, are often noxious to animal life: but this want of wood, while it diminishes the general beauty of the country, is felt as a most serious inconvenience by its inhabitants: and an observation of the fact compels us to subscribe to the justice of the remark of an intelligent Indian, who, on hearing some comparisons between the countries of Persia and India, which he deemed injurious to the latter, exclaimed: " You Persians are continually boasting of your " climate; but, after all, you have neither shade to protect you " from the scorching rays of the sun in summer, nor fuel to save " you from the effects of the piercing cold of winter!" Speaking generally, however, we may certainly pronounce, that the temperature of the interior provinces of Persia is delightful and healthy; though there are, no doubt, several parts of that kingdom which are subject to all the extremes of heat and cold, and others that are far from salubrious *.

The surface of the soil of Persia varies, from the sandy and unproductive plains on the shores of the Persian Gulf, to the rich

* The natives of the more arid regions of this country, particularly those provinces which lie on the shore of the Persian Gulf, have almost all complaints in their eyes, occasioned, in some degree, by the constant glare of sunshine, and the absence of vegetation; but more, perhaps, by want of that cleanliness, which, in such climes, is, beyond every thing else, conducive to health. Fevers are also frequent in this quarter, but not so much so as in some of the north-western provinces of the empire. Irak, Khorassan, and the inland parts of Fars, are among the healthiest parts of Persia: but, throughout that country, the robust frames and healthy appearance of the natives, are proofs in favour of their climate: and there is, perhaps, no nation among whom it is more rare to meet weakly or deformed persons.

CHAP. XXIV

clayey soil on those of the Caspian; but it almost every where requires water to render it fruitful: and it is from this cause, more than any other, that the frequent invasions to which it has been exposed have tended so greatly to diminish the produce, and, consequently, to check the population of that country. The destruction of a few water-courses, which have been made with great labour and expense, changes, in one season, a verdant valley into a desert plain. Few countries can boast of better vegetable* productions, or in greater variety, than Persia. Its gardens vie in beauty and luxuriance with any in the universe: and an idea may be formed, from what we observe of those parts of it that are highly cultivated, of the prosperity which that country might attain under a just and settled government. Some of its finest and most extensive vallies, which are covered with the remains of cities and villages, are consigned, as pasture grounds, to wandering tribes, to feed their cattle and flocks; and over an extent of a hundred miles, once covered with grain, there now appears only the few scattered fields which are deemed sufficient to furnish with food the families who have the range of the domain, and to give an annual supply of green shoots † to fatten their horses.

Vegetable productions.

Minerals.

Persia does not abound in valuable minerals. Iron and lead, however, are found in many parts of that kingdom. The natives boast that there are also mines ‡ of both silver and gold; but these

* I took great pains to introduce the potatoe into Persia; and the soil, in many parts, proved very favourable to that vegetable.

† The first shoots of the barley, which are termed khusseel, are cut in the spring, to give to their horses.

‡ I have been informed, that a mine of gold was discovered in Fars, and one

have never been worked to any advantage. Persia has always been indebted to other countries for the precious metals: and it is remarkable, that among a people whose sovereign deems the right of coining, his highest privilege, that foreign coins should form a considerable part of the currency * of his kingdom. There are no gems of any value found in this country except the turkois †. The Gulf of Persia has several pearl fisheries, particularly that near the Island of Bahreen: but we can hardly consider any of those fisheries as belonging to Persia; for though the monarchs of that nation have always claimed the sovereignty of this sea, they have at no period had a navy that could enable them to contend with the Arabian rulers of the opposite shore.

Gems.

Pearls.

Among the tame animals ‡ of Persia, the camel, the mule, and the horse, are at once the most useful and the most excellent. Oxen, which are only used to till the ground, are not abundant; nor are they remarkable either for their size or beauty: but in a country

Tame animals.

Oxen.

of silver in Aderbijan; but those ores were not found in sufficient quantities to pay the expense of working them.

* The Turkish piastre, the ducat, and the Venetian, are among the coins which are current in Persia.

† The best turkois are found in a mine in the mountains near Nishapore, in Khorassan.

‡ The elephant can no longer be numbered among the tame animals of Persia, as there are not above three or four in the kingdom, which have been sent as presents to the king. It is not probable that the elephant was ever indigenous to Persia: but there is no doubt that, from the most early times, they were known and used in war by its inhabitants; and we may conclude, from the sculpture at the Tauk-e-bostan, which was undoubtedly executed in the reign of Baharam the Fourth, that numbers of this noble animal swelled the pomp of the Sassanian monarchs.

CHAP. XXIV. where there are neither navigable rivers nor wheel carriages, it is natural that those animals, which are alike essential to promote the intercourse of peace, or to give success to the operations of war, should be the object of the peculiar care of the inhabitants. In all those parts of Persia where the soil is arid and sandy, and which are exposed to great heats, camels are preferred, for carrying burthens, to all other animals. In some districts * of Khorassan they may be said to constitute the chief wealth of the inhabitants: but, in almost all the other provinces of the kingdom, mules are in more general use; and their extraordinary strength and activity, combined with their power of enduring fatigue, places this animal, in the estimation of the natives of Persia, next to the horse, and their breed is hardly an object of inferior care.

Camels.

Mules.

Horses.

A variety of horses are produced in Persia. The inhabitants of the districts which border on the Gulf still preserve pure those races of that animal which their ancestors brought from the opposite shore of Arabia. In Fars and Irak they have a mixed breed from the Arabian, which, though stronger, is still a small horse, compared with either the Turkoman or Khorassan breed, which are most prized by the soldiers of Persia †. Both these latter races have

* The Arab tribes who inhabit the countries which lie between the Persian Gulf and the mountains, breed a number of camels, but they are of an inferior kind to those produced in Arabia, and many provinces of India.

† The price of horses in Persia varies extremely. The common horse is always to be purchased from fifteen to forty pounds: fine horses, particularly of the Turkoman or Khorassan breed, are, in general, very dear; a hundred pounds is a common price, and sometimes a much larger sum is paid. They are often valued more from their breed than their appearance.

also a great portion of Arabian blood: but from the original animal of the country where they are reared being larger, and the pasture finer, they attain great size and strength. There are perhaps no horses in the world capable of enduring more fatigue than the Turkoman; and when trained, as they usually are, for predatory incursions, they carry their riders, for days together, the most surprising marches*. The inhabitants of Persia were taught to value this race of animals by suffering from the inroads of the tribes by whom they are bred; and who, secure in the superior qualities of the animals that carried them, used to issue, in parties of twenty and thirty, from the plains they inhabit, on the eastern shores of the Caspian, and plunder the villages in the vicinity of the Cities of Kashan and Isfahan.

Sheep. Sheep are very abundant in Persia. The wealth of the wandering tribes consists in the number of their flocks: but they give no attention to the improvement of the breed of this useful animal, which affords them food, and some of the most essential articles of their raiment. Dogs. Though dogs be deemed unclean by Mahomedans, the qualities of this faithful animal have overcome every prejudice; and we find them in Persia, as in other countries, admitted to a companionship with man. They are chiefly cherished by the wandering tribes. They watch their flocks, guard their tents, and aid them in their field sports. Some of the dogs of this country which

* I have before mentioned (Vol. II. page 241) the great distances which the Turkoman horses carry their riders. When I was in Persia in 1800, a horseman, mounted upon a Turkoman horse, brought a packet of letters from Shiraz to Teheran, which is a distance of five hundred miles, within six days.

CHAP. XXIV

are used in the chase, may be deemed among the most beautiful of their species.

Wild animals.

Persia, like every country of which many parts are desolate, abounds in wild animals; among which may be numbered the lion, the wolf, the jackall, the fox, the hare, the wild ass, the argali, or "wild sheep," the mountain goat, and deer of a variety of kinds. We also find in this kingdom almost all the birds that are common to countries which lie in the same latitudes.

Population.

It appears quite impossible to make a calculation of the amount of the population of Persia from any information that we yet possess of that country; and we are taught to be very diffident in even offering a conjecture upon this subject, by the difficulty which we know to exist, in cases where there appears to be every means to aid us in forming a correct opinion. The calculations which the Persians themselves make of the population of their country are exaggerated beyond all credit. In a manuscript, which professes to be taken from state papers in the reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, and which enters into all the details of the numbers of the different tribes and citizens, the total amount of the subjects of the Monarch of Persia is gravely stated at upwards of two hundred millions! An European traveller *, who made his estimate near a century earlier, expresses his belief that the inhabitants of that kingdom are about forty millions: but an eminent geographer †, on the conclusion that the population of Persia and Candahar does not exceed that of Asiatic Turkey, computes their number at ten

* Chardin.

† Pinkerton.

millions; of which he thinks four may be allotted to the provinces of Candahar, and six to what he terms Western Persia, or, in other words, the limits of the present kingdom: and this estimate is probably not very remote from truth. It gives about one hundred to the square mile; and, though some parts of Persia may far exceed that calculation, there are large tracts of desert which are totally uninhabited. CHAP.XXIV

There are, no doubt, many and powerful checks upon population in Persia: the unsettled state of the government, its oppression, the continual civil and foreign wars; and, above all others, the debauchery and vice of a great proportion of the inhabitants, and the consequent neglect of their offspring. But, on the other hand, when we consider the salubrity of the climate, the cheapness of provisions *, the rare occurrence of famine, the bloodless character of their civil wars, their obligation to marry, and the comparative small number of prostitutes, we may conclude that the population of this country has not diminished so much within the last century as is generally supposed. Great changes have taken place in the condition of cities, and many numerous tribes have removed from their former spots of residence; but in most cases they have only been transplanted to other parts of the kingdom. Within the last twelve years the number of the citizens of Isfahan has nearly doubled †, in conse-

* Barley is often sold in Persia at one farthing per pound, and wheat is not on the average more than a third of the price dearer than barley. A cow is from sixteen to twenty shillings; a good sheep from six to eight shillings; a goat from two to four shillings: and other articles of provision in proportion.

† The population of this city, when it was the capital of the Suffavean Kings, was, if we can credit the European travellers by whom it was visited, between six

CHAP. XXIV quence of the excellent local administration of that city, which has induced its former inhabitants to return from the villages near the mountains, where they had taken shelter from violence and oppression.

In Persia, as in other parts of Asia, male offspring are desired beyond all other blessings, even by the lowest ranks; but female children, though not equally esteemed, cannot be deemed a burden upon their parents, in a country where celibacy is unknown, and where the poorest are seldom in want of food. It is also to be remarked, that in all Mahomedan countries charity is so strictly enjoined as a religious duty, that a considerable proportion of the superfluous means of the rich is always distributed among the poor: and this must have its effect in encouraging population; for there is no fact more certain, than that that will always keep pace with the means of subsistence. The circumstance of the Persians being allowed to emigrate at pleasure to adjacent countries, where many of them find profitable employment, is also calculated to add, in a slight degree, to their numbers, as it removes one check to their increase.

Though the population of Persia has perhaps diminished in a very considerable degree since the invasion of the Affghans, it has, no doubt, increased within the last twenty years, and may be said to be, at this period, rapidly increasing. But this observation only applies to the Mahomedan inhabitants of that country. The despised Jews are much decreased in numbers; and the persecuted

and seven hundred thousand. When I went to Persia in 1800, it was not supposed to exceed one hundred thousand; and it is now calculated at nearly two hundred thousand.

Guebers, whose residence is confined to a quarter of the city of Yezd, are probably over estimated, when computed at four thousand families. The colony of Armenians, settled in a suburb of Isfahan, which formerly amounted to two thousand five hundred families, some of whom were of great opulence, do not now amount to five hundred, none of whom are wealthy; and this race has diminished in a still greater proportion in all other parts of the empire. The whole of the Armenians in Persia are calculated, in an estimate made of their number by order of the Bishop of Julfa, to amount to twelve thousand three hundred and eighty-three souls, which is said to be not more than a sixth of their number before the Affghan invasion *.

Magnificence and splendour of Isfahan.

Persia has in all ages been remarkable for the magnificence and splendour of its cities. Isfahan, which was for several centuries the capital of this kingdom, though it has ceased to be the royal residence, is still the most populous. When viewed at a distance, the lofty palaces, and the domes of the numerous mosques and colleges of this city, derive additional beauty from being half veiled by shady avenues and luxuriant gardens. Though the first impression be weakened by a nearer view, and by the contemplation of the ruins of former grandeur, enough remains to excite great admiration. The fine bridges over the Zainderood are still in good repair; almost all the colleges have been preserved; and many of the former palaces are yet perfect; while some new ones

* I owe this enumeration of the Armenian population in Persia to Captain Frederick, who obtained it from the Bishop of Julfa. The statement made out by the bishop is very particular, and has every appearance of being correct.

CHAP. XXIV. have lately been erected by the present governor *, as if to tempt the reigning monarch to make this city once more the royal residence. No buildings can be more striking than some of these palaces. The front room or hall is in general very open, and supported by pillars that are carved and gilded in the most exquisite manner; while the large glass windows, through which it receives a mellow light, are curiously stained with a variety of colours. Before each of these palaces is an open space, with a fountain, near which the domestics stand to watch the looks and words of the lord of the dwelling, who is generally seated at one of the windows.

The Châr-Bagh, or " the great avenue," which has received the name of the Four Gardens, has been already described †. Several of the private palaces that are built on the borders of this avenue, though uninhabited for more than a century, are still in good repair, and their appearance adds to the beauty of the city. The style of the architecture of these palaces is light and pleasing, though neither regular nor magnificent: and they have, at a distance, a very picturesque effect, from being surrounded with gardens and fine avenues.

Every principal market in Isfahan is covered with an arched roof; and, while ample room is left on an elevated space on each side for a display of goods, there is a road in the centre for passengers, whether on foot or on horseback. The principal caravansaries or inns of this city are excellent solid buildings; and many of the public baths are very splendid, being of great size, and paved with marble. The private houses are in general

* Hajee Mahomed Hussein Khan.

† Vide Vol. I. p. 621.

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C. Heath

FRONT VIEW OF A PALACE AT ISFAHAN.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

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PRIVATE PALACE IN THE CHÂR-BÂGH.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

good; and those which are inhabited by the governor and other public officers, or opulent merchants, almost vie with the palaces. These, like all Asiatic houses, present outwardly no appearance but that of high and dead walls, without aperture or window. One large door or gate is usually the only approach. In the interior there is a court, which, if large, is laid out in walks, the sides of which are planted with flowers and refreshed by fountains. To this court all the principal apartments of the mansion which are inhabited by men open; and adjoining, but completely distinct from this court, is a smaller one, around which are the inner apartments, belonging to the females of the family. To promote a free circulation of air in summer, every house of this description has a high triangular building *, which rises far above the terraced roof, and is open at the top; it receives the wind in whatever direction it blows, and by this means the different apartments are ventilated: in winter these are warmed by stoves, which are constantly supplied with burning charcoal. Almost every dwelling of any consequence in Isfahan has a garden belonging to it. This, while it adds to the salubrity and beauty of the city, must greatly increase its extent, and reconciles us to credit the account which states, that in its more prosperous days its walls were twenty miles in circumference †.

Teheran and Shiraz.

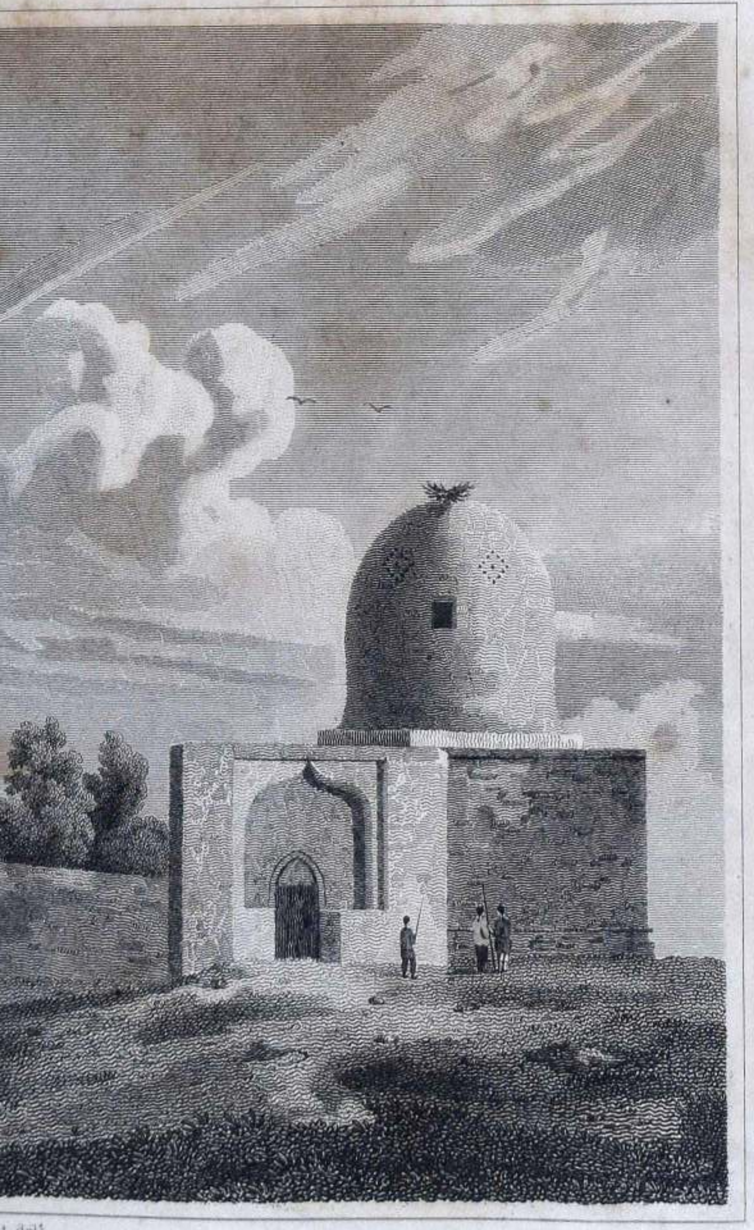
Teheran can as yet boast no splendid edifices except the palace of the monarch. The munificence of Kurreem Khan ornamented

* This ventilator is termed in Persia Baudgeer, which literally signifies "a wind "catcher."

† This is Chardin's statement, Vol. VII. p. 284. Kempfœr asserts, that Isfahan, with its suburbs, were sixteen fursukhs, or about sixty miles: but this is evidently a great exaggeration.

CHAP. XXIV Shiraz with a bazar or market, which is equal, if not superior, to any at Isfahan: but Shiraz has not many public buildings: and as there are few gardens and no avenues within its walls, its bare mud terraced houses, when viewed at a distance, give it more the appearance of a ruined, than a flourishing city*. Hamadan. The Town of Hamadan, once so famous under its ancient name of Ecbatana, has few beauties to attract the attention of the traveller. The small dome which canopies the remains of Mordecai and Esther, and the modest tomb of the celebrated physician Avicenna, stand near the centre of this city. The former, as has been stated, continues to be an object of veneration to the Jews, and the latter is visited by all travellers who respect the memory of learning and genius. Many of the other cities of Persia are as remarkable for the excellence of their buildings as for the romantic beauty of their situation. Their site is usually upon small rivers or streams, and surrounded with gardens. Almost all the towns in Persia have a defence: this is generally a high mud wall, which is flanked by turrets, and sometimes protected by a deep dry ditch and a rude glacis. In every city or town of Persia there are one or more public caravansaries for the accommodation of travellers. These edifices, which are also found at every stage on the principal roads of the kingdom, are in general built of stone or brick: their form is square, and the whole of the interior is divided into separate apartments: their walls,

* The environs of Shiraz have always been considered beautiful. The palace and garden of Jehân Nemâh, and that of Tukht Kujureâh, as well as the gardens at the tombs of Hafiz and Sadi, are all places of public resort. The cluster of gardens at Musjid-e-Burdee, which belong to the inhabitants of this city, extend in length about five miles, and in breadth nearly two: they abound with every variety of the finest fruits.



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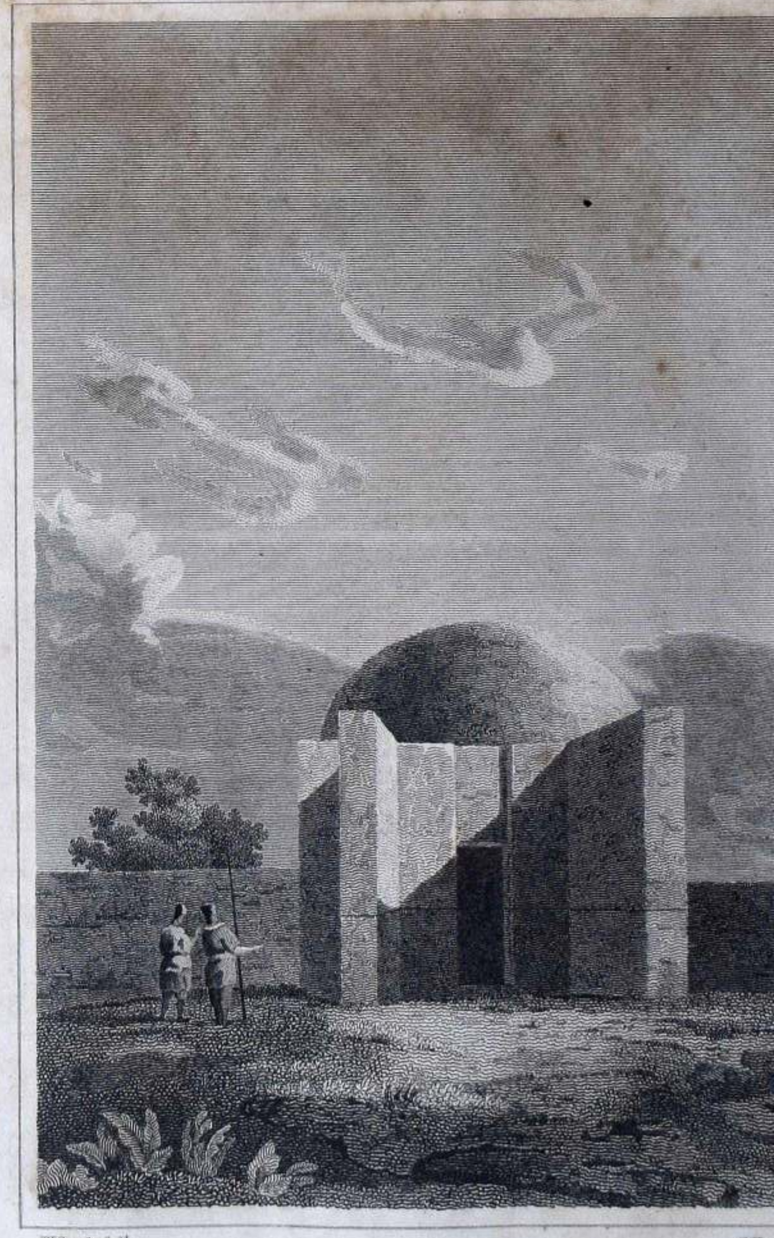
TOMB OF ESTHER & MORDECAI.



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TOMB OF AVICENNA.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

W. Sundt del.t C. Heath sculp.t

VIEW OF THE MOUNTAIN OF KAUFELÂN-KÔH & THE BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER KOOZULOOZUN.

which are very high, are usually defended by towers, that they may be secure against the attack of robbers. The houses in Persia are almost all built of mud, and have terraced roofs. Their inner apartments are usually better than their external appearance indicates. The smaller villages are in general very rudely constructed; and the common huts have often, instead of a terrace, a dome roof, that is made to avoid the necessity of using wood, which, it has been before stated, is throughout this country a very scarce article.

Public roads.

There can hardly be said to be any roads in Persia; nor are they much required, for the use of wheel carriages has not yet been introduced into that kingdom. Nothing can be more rugged and difficult than the paths which have been cut over the mountains by which it is bounded and intersected. The great benefits that would be derived from good roads has often been suggested to the Persians; but they have a reluctance to adopt an improvement which they believe, and not without reason, would destroy one of those natural obstacles by which their country is defended from invasion. The only exception to this observation is a broad road or causeway, which has been made, with great labour, over the Kaufelân-koh *, a lofty and romantic mountain, which divides Irak from Aderbijan †: and this

* The river Koozuloozun winds along the foot of the Kaufelân-koh: a bridge has been built over this fine stream; and the scene has recently acquired more interest, from its being that near which the late ingenious traveller, Mr. Brown, was murdered by some banditti.

† The Kaufelân-koh is usually described as the boundary between these two provinces; but at present the district of Kalkul, which contains near one hundred and fifty villages, and is situated to the southward of the mountains, is considered as belonging to Aderbijan.

labour is attributed to the Turks, who, when in possession of the latter province, desired to facilitate their further attacks upon Persia.

Useful and fine arts.

The more civilized and peaceable classes of the inhabitants of Persia, who dwell in cities, towns, and villages, have made considerable progress in both the useful and fine arts: but it appears from their productions, and the accounts we have received from European travellers, that they were as far advanced several centuries ago as they are at this moment. This is not so much to be attributed to the internal distractions of their country, or to their prejudices, as to the form and character of their government. Men who live under a rude despotism can only be happy by reconciling themselves to their actual condition; every effort at improvement is attended with danger to the individual by whom it is made. If a new branch of commerce is discovered, the gains of those who have embarked in it are likely to be over-estimated, and they become exposed to the cupidity of power. If an individual exhibit superior skill as a manufacturer, his labour is liable to be seized by the monarch, or by the provincial despot that rules under him*: and the promulgation of new principles of science, however just, subjects the person to all the hostility of that formidable class, whose rank in the community is grounded upon their supposed pre-eminence in knowledge, and who are disposed to treat a serious attack upon their dogmas as a crime that is hardly less than heresy. With these obstacles to prevent the progress of improvement, there is nothing to encourage it.

* I have known several instances of this occur, even under the reigning monarch, whose rule is comparatively mild and just.

Amid the vicissitudes to which they are liable, few persons look further than to provide for their own welfare. The history of Persia affords numerous instances of men being led, by religious sentiments, or a desire of fame, to disburse great sums in charity: and many, even among the lower classes, who have acquired wealth, have wished to perpetuate their name by building caravansaries, baths, and other structures of public utility. But they neither profess nor entertain any feelings connected with the general good of their country: all their views are avowedly personal: and, from the character of their government, it is impossible that they can be otherwise. A monarch, or a prince, may, from the excellence of his disposition, or the goodness of his understanding, indulge in plans of improvement: but even his views are limited by his condition; and he desires to effect the work of half a century* in one or two years. His precipitation produces failure: for that which depends upon system, cannot be effected by power. Besides, all great improvements are gradual: and even when they are introduced, the society must take the shape to which they are suited, or they cannot be permanent.

The above reasons will account for the inhabitants of Persia having made no essential progress in the arts of civilized life. That

* I observed to a very ingenious Persian who was employed in casting cannon, that some of the guns he had just made appeared to me to be imperfect, and that one seemed rather crooked. He replied, it was very true, but that it was not his fault: he had been commanded to do the work of ten months in ten days. "But why "do not you represent the impossibility of doing so?" said I. He shook his head, and said, he knew better. "My master," he added, "is an excellent and just man, but "still he is a Persian prince; and his orders, whatever they are, must be obeyed."

CHAP. XXIV

Commerce.

country has, for ten centuries, appeared as if on the brink of great improvements, but is still stationary. Its commerce is nearly the same as it was in the most ancient times. The silks of Ghilan, the wool of Carmania, and several vegetable productions*, are still exported. The specie received for these, pays for the shawls of Cashmere, the indigo and printed cottons of India, the sugar of Batavia and of China, and the woollens of England.

Agriculture.

In reading the descriptions of the agriculture of Persia that have been given by travellers at different periods, we discover little or no alteration in that important art. The means which the natives of that country now employ to till the ground are probably those which were used by their ancestors in the most remote ages. They have, at all periods, been peculiarly well skilled in the construction of canals and wells; an essential art in so arid a country. But the chief attention of the Persians is devoted to their gardens: and their success has been proportionate to their labours. Their vegetables and fruits†, of which they have a great variety, are excellent. The latter may be said to form, during the season, part of the daily food of the lowest classes of the inhabitants of this kingdom‡.

* There is a considerable export of cotton, gall nuts, and of asafœtida, from Persia. The cotton and gall nuts are chiefly the produce of Irak; the asafœtida, of Khorassan.

† In 1800, the finest grapes were sold in the market at Shiraz at less than a half-penny per pound; and other fruits, particularly melons, were still cheaper at Isfahan. In some parts of Persia fruit has hardly a value.

‡ It has been before stated, that extensive fields are appropriated in the neighbourhood of Isfahan for the culture of melons; and the country round that city is decorated with handsome pigeon-houses, which are kept up at a considerable expense, to obtain what is deemed the best manure for this favourite fruit.

Many of the manufactures of Persia are beautiful, particularly their gold and silver brocades, their silks, and their imitation of Cashmere shawls, which are made of the wool of Kerman. They make a variety of cotton cloths, but not of an equally fine texture as those of India. They have also several manufactories of glass, and some of a coarse ware resembling china; but their efforts have not yet succeeded in bringing these wares to any perfection. Manufactures

In mechanical arts the Persians are not inferior to the other nations of the East; but they do not surpass them. They work well in steel; and their swords, though brittle, are of an excellent temper and edge. They also make fire-arms, and cast cannon; and would soon rival Europeans in this branch of manufacture, if it were possible that a government, so constituted as that under which they live, could give adequate encouragement to men of science, and to the ingenuity of its own subjects. In the arts of carving and gilding few nations are more skilful. They also enamel upon gold and silver in the most beautiful manner: and their ornaments, which are made of these metals and precious stones, often display admirable workmanship. Mechanism.

Chymistry, as now understood in Europe, is unknown in Persia; but the occult science of alchymy continues to be the favourite pursuit of some of the most learned of that country. The philosopher's stone, which, for ten centuries, occupied the attention of the wisest men of the western hemisphere, still deludes those of the East. The Persian alchymists make their experiments with the greatest secrecy, lest others should share in the wonderful discovery which they hourly expect will reward their labour. This veil of impenetrable mystery, while it gives an importance to the pursuit in the Chymistry.

CHAP. XXIV minds of the ignorant, affords an opportunity to impostors for practising the most serious frauds upon the credulous and wealthy*.

Physic.

In physic the Persians are still the pupils of Galen and Hypocrates, whom they call Galenous and Bocrat. They are totally

* The mountain of Alwund near Hamadan is supposed to produce some plants that are essential to the process of finding the philosopher's stone; and the consequence is, that many persons in that city waste their life in the pursuit. A few years ago, one of its rich inhabitants was assured, by a poor man, that he had made the glorious discovery: "But," said he, "if I, who am known to be poor, should suddenly exhibit wealth, the "secret from whence I have obtained it will be guessed, and I shall be seized and tor-"tured till I reveal it. Now, if you," he added, "possessed it, the knowledge could be "attended with no such danger. I will, therefore," he continued, "trust you with the "communication; and if you are satisfied, after repeated experiments, that I have told "truth, you can give me a small portion of the wealth you must acquire, and I will "proceed and end my days in devotion at the shrine of the holy Aly, where, from its "being under the Turkish government, I shall be safe from that danger to which my "fortune, in making this discovery, continually exposes me." The whole of this statement appeared so reasonable, that the person to whom it was communicated granted a ready belief. He was made acquainted with all the materials which were to be put into the crucibles except one, termed "the earth of Bâdeoos:" but this, his informer assured him, was not only obtained at the mountain of Alwund, but in several other parts of Persia, and, being useful for many purposes, was to be found in most markets. He was, however, entreated to send his servants to inquire into the correctness of this statement. They went, and brought back some of the earth, which they had purchased at a very moderate rate. When every thing was ready, the experiment was made, and gold was produced. The merchant was rejoiced; but, to prevent deception, it was repeated, and with the same result. All doubts were removed, and he was only anxious to pay the purchase money of the secret, and get rid of his partner. The man, the relator of this anecdote states, was contented with two thousand tomâns, and proceeded to the Turkish province of Bagdad. The merchant, after he was gone, determined to commence making more gold; but he was not a little surprised to find, that those shopkeepers who had

unacquainted with anatomy and the circulation of the blood*; and their skill in surgery is consequently as rude as their knowledge of medicine. They class both their diseases and their remedies under four heads: hot, cold, moist, or dry: each may contain one or two of these qualities: and the great principle they maintain is, that the disease must be cured by a remedy of an opposite quality. If, for instance, an illness has arisen from moisture, dry remedies must be given: and hot diseases are alone to be cured by cooling medicines. Their classification of diseases appears very arbitrary: but they are in general so bigoted to their own practice, that, though disposed to place great confidence in European physicians, they are reluctant to attend to their prescriptions when in opposition to their favourite system†. The Persian physicians are

sold the Khâk, or "earth of Bâdeoos," were gone. He, however, thought it possible that, though that essential ingredient was not at Hamadan, it might be found, as his friend had told him, in other cities. His correspondents at Shiraz, at Teheran, and Isfahan, received letter after letter, desiring them to discover and purchase all the Khâk-e-Bâdeoos they could. No person had ever heard of its name. The rage and distraction of the merchant soon led to a discovery of the fraud that had been practised upon him. The cunning fellow, who had made him his dupe, had filed down thirty or forty pieces of gold into some baskets of earth, which he had dignified with a fine name, and given to some associates to sell. He was, however, beyond the reach of justice: and the merchant had to sustain, in addition to his pecuniary loss, the ridicule of all acquainted with the story.

* The Prince Abbas Meerza sent two young Persians to England about four years ago; the one was directed to study painting, the other medicine, and the art of surgery. The former unfortunately died. The latter, whose name is Hajee Baba, is still in England prosecuting his studies, and promises, from his intelligence and industry, to fulfil the object for which he was sent.

† Mr. Jukes, in a MS. upon this subject, observes, that when at Isfahan in 1804,

CHAP. XXIV acquainted with inoculation for the small-pox, but it is little practised, though the ravages of that dreadful disease often threaten whole towns with depopulation; and notwithstanding their sufferings from this calamity, all the efforts of humane and skilful surgeons resident in that country have not yet succeeded in making them sensible of the great benefit of vaccination *. The principal men of the kingdom listened with rapture to the accounts they received of this great and important discovery, and appeared at the moment to desire that their country should benefit by its introduction †: but, though a wish to promote the happiness and welfare of the people is often expressed, and sometimes felt, by Asiatic rulers, we can hardly expect, in a government so constituted as that of Persia, that steady

ulcerated sore throats were very common; and that he apprehended many patients died because the physicians had decided it was a "hot disease," and therefore was to be cured by bleeding and all other cooling remedies. He mentions also some cases of dysentery, where he in vain recommended mercury. It was a *hot* remedy, the Persian physicians said, and could never be proper where the disease was also hot. Ice and cooling draughts were administered, and several died whom he conceived might have been saved, if their prejudices, with regard to their system of physic, could have been overcome.

* A chief of a tribe assured an officer belonging to the British mission who visited Persia in 1810, that he had been told that some particular pastoral tribes were exempt from the small-pox; but though he was positive of the fact, he could give no particular account of the habits of those supposed to be exempted from this disease: but as many of these tribes have a number of cattle, the assertion had, perhaps, some foundation in truth.

† Nothing can exceed the persevering humanity with which Mr. Jukes endeavoured to introduce vaccination into Persia. His efforts were unremitted for several years: they were defeated more by the apathy of the government towards the general good of the community, than the prejudices of the people.

and persevering ardour for the general good of the community, which can alone give complete success to the introduction of this great and extraordinary blessing.

What has been said of their knowledge of physic, only applies to the more civilized part of the inhabitants of Persia who live in cities and towns, and a great proportion of whom have received some education. Those who dwell in tents are seldom attended by regular professors of this art; but, as their diet is simple, and they take constant exercise, they are subject to few complaints, and for these every old man and old woman * of the tribe have a remedy. Sometimes, like the ignorant and superstitious of other countries, they trust more to their saints than their doctors. When the British mission that visited Persia fifteen years ago, was in Irak, the English gentlemen belonging to it were shown a few pieces of bread, covered with oil, which were

* When I returned from the Persian court in the winter of 1800, almost every individual of the mission became blind, from the glare of the snow, with which the country was covered. The recovery was certain, but tedious: and, when blind myself, I listened with delight to a message from the lady of a chief, in whose house I was a guest, which imported, that she knew a certain and a speedy remedy, provided I would consent to permit her servants to apply it. When I expressed my readiness to do so, a large vessel, full of snow, was put before me, and I was desired to place my face near it: a red hot stone was then thrown into the vessel, and the sudden dissolution of the snow caused a very great perspiration, which was increased by a cloak being pulled at the same moment over my head. This remedy, (which was administered twice,) though very disagreeable, proved efficacious, and my sight was completely restored. It appears that they have a similar remedy in North America when the eyes are affected by the snow, as it is stated, in the Travels of Captains Lewis and Clarke, that, on such occasions, "they sweat the part affected, by holding "the face over a hot stone, and receiving the fumes from snow thrown on it."—Vide *Quarterly Review*, No. XXIII. page 330.

CHAP. XXIV laid upon a rock, as an offering to a saint; and they were told, that they might, by these pieces of bread, compute the exact number of sick in the black tents that were pitched near, as this offering was the usual, and almost the only effort made to obtain their recovery from any disease * with which they were attacked.

In cases of surgery the treatment is very rude: but the abstemious habits, and consequent healthy state of body of the patient, often obtain extraordinary credit to the untutored practitioner.

Though the regular physicians in Persia generally adhere strictly to the dogmas of their Grecian master, as explained and enlarged upon by Abou Aly-ben-Senna, (the Avicenna of Europeans,) and others of their most learned doctors, they boast the discovery of many new remedies. Salivation is quickly produced, by inhaling, through the common pipe of the country, a lozenge made of cinnabar and flour †: and this speedy mode of affecting the system is universally practised, where the case is deemed of a nature to require it.

In this country, as in all others, there are many quacks in medicine, who obtain money or respect by pretending to cure all complaints ‡. Some of these boast an hereditary right to certain

* When passing through Kurdistan, in A. D. 1810, I was told by the chief of a rude tribe in that country, that his followers had only one medicine, which was a purgative, in which the chief ingredient was the fat of a sheep's tail. "This was boiled," he said, "and given, sometimes in small, and at others in large doses. It answered "very well," he added, "in all complaints; and it saves us a great deal of trouble, "and the expense of doctors."

† Mr. Jukes's MS.

‡ I find, in Mr. Jukes's Journal, the following remarks upon the supposed practice in Persia of cold immersion for fevers:

"Dr. Currie," that gentleman observes, "in the 2d volume of his Medical Reports,

nostrums. The chiefs of a tribe among the mountains which divide the territories of Persia from those of the Pachalick of Bagdad, assert the possession of power, descended through many generations, of CHAP. XXIV

" relates the case of Sir John Chardin, when treated by a Persian physician at Lâr. " During my residence in Persia I had never heard of Dr. Currie's system being " adopted there: upon reading the case of Chardin, therefore, I was naturally induced " to make inquiries if cold water was ever applied to the body in fevers by the physi- " cians of the present day in Persia. The first person to whom I applied for informa- " tion, was a well-informed man, who had made medicine his particular study, and was " at least acquainted with all the theories of disease, if he had not a very extensive " practical knowledge. He told me, that he never had heard of the application of cold " water to the body in fever, and spoke confidently of its not being the general prac- " tice of the modern physicians in Persia: tepid water to drink, and warm water, in " which the leaves of the willow had been infused, to bathe the hands and feet, was " more agreeable to their system of treating fevers; except in *quartan fevers*, when he " informed me, that cold water was sometimes dashed unexpectedly upon the patient, " and cured him. In continued fevers, however, he told me, that he had never heard of " it; but in very hot weather, he said, it was admissible, and even proper, to keep the " patient cool; and that cold water, in which the willow leaves had been infused, " might be sprinkled round where the patient lay. When I mentioned to him the " case of Sir John Chardin, and the manner in which he had been so successfully " treated at Lâr, he seemed quite astonished, and said, ' It could only have been had " recourse to by knowing that Sir John was an European from a cold climate, and that " cold, therefore, was congenial with his nature: for if,' added he, ' the same person " had been a native of a warm climate, the physician would, in all probability, have " ordered him the *warm* bath.' I have heard, however, of one physician in Persia, " who allowed his patients with continued fever to eat as much *ice* as they chose; but " the use of the cold affusion seems to be quite unknown at the present day.

" According to the theory of the Persian physicians, however," Mr. Jukes adds, " it " would appear to be very admissible; for it is a favourite maxim of theirs, that dis- " eases are to be cured by remedies directly opposite in their qualities to those of the

CHAP. XXIV curing the ague, which is a common complaint in that country, by beating the patient in a very unmerciful manner. Their success in this practice is said to be great. It must remain with those who are skilled in the medical art to determine how far it is possible that this rude treatment can have the effects ascribed to it *.

In the higher branches of science the modern Persians know no more than their ancestors. They have a limited knowledge of mathematics, and they study astronomy chiefly for the purpose of becoming

" disease. Now, as in fever the sensible qualities are *heat* and *dryness*, water, which is " *cold* and *moist*, ought to be its antidote. Their theories, however, as I have before " remarked, are occasionally very arbitrary, and very erroneous. *Ice* and *snow*, for in- " stance, possess very different qualities, according to their belief. They assert, that " ice is *cold* and *moist*, and that snow is *cold* and *dry*."

* I visited Kerrund twice: in 1800 and in 1810. When first there, the chief of that place, whose name was Hedâyet Kooli Khan, saw one of the gentlemen belonging to the mission lying down in the tent, ill of a quartan ague: he anxiously begged I would allow him to cure him; and being interrogated as to the remedy, he said he would beat him with sticks till he was well. The invalid declined the experiment; at which the chief was not a little offended, and brought numbers of his followers to swear that they had been recovered by his blows. Hedâyet Kooli, when I last visited this place, was dead. He had left ten sons; of whom the eldest, Mahomed Aly Khan, was chief of the tribe. I inquired of this young man if he had succeeded to the knowledge of his father in medicine. " His practice," he said, " was equally successful." I asked him particularly how he treated his patients. " I tie them up," said he, " by the heels, " when the cold fit is on, and bastinado them most severely, scolding them at the same " time, so as to produce heat and terror, instead of a cold fit."—" And you succeed ?"— " Always."—" Have you any other patients but your own followers ?"—" A few: those " in the neighbourhood who have any sense, come to me when they are ill of the " ague."—" Can any of your brothers cure fevers ?"—" No! no!" replied he quickly, " that is a gift or privilege confined exclusively to the head of the family."

skilled in judicial astrology; a science in which the whole nation, from the monarch to the peasant, have the greatest faith. The system of Ptolemy, both with respect to the forms and motions of the heavenly bodies, and the shape and surface of the earth, is that in which they believe. Efforts have recently been made to convey better information to them upon this important branch of human science. An abstract of the Copernican system, and the proofs which the labours of Newton have afforded of its truth, have been translated into Persian; and several individuals of that nation have laboured to acquire a knowledge beyond what their countrymen possess upon this noble but abstruse subject: but it is not probable that these rays of light will soon dissipate the cloud of darkness in which a prejudiced and superstitious nation have been for centuries involved.

Geography.

The Persians can hardly be said to understand geography as a science; for, independent of their erroneous impressions regarding the form of the earth, their knowledge of its surface is limited to an imperfect acquaintance with the territories of those kingdoms that are in their immediate vicinity; nor do they understand the art of surveying in a degree that could enable them to lay down, with any exactness whatever, that portion of the globe which they themselves inhabit.

Literature.

We can add little to the various accounts which have been given of the literature of the Persians. With the introduction of the Mahomedan religion that nation received all the learning of the Arabians of the seventh century; and we find that soon after that period their writers, in every branch of literature, attained an excellence which has not been surpassed by their descendants. Their

CHAP.XXIV works on theology are very numerous; and it has been shown, in a former Chapter *, that they are well skilled in all the arts of polemics. The character of their histories has been already given †. The style of their most esteemed writers in this branch, though often hyperbolical, is generally correct, and sometimes eloquent. The Persians, like all Eastern nations, delight in tales, fables, and apophthegms: the reason of which appears obvious; for where liberty is unknown, and where power, in all its shapes, is despotic, knowledge must be veiled to be useful ‡. The ear of a despot would be wounded by the expression of direct truths; and genius itself must condescend to appear in that form in which alone its superiority would be tolerated.

* Vide Vol. II. page 351. † Vide Vol. I. page 275.

‡ The Persians boast of the great good which their most eminent moralist Sadi has produced, by the rare union of fancy, learning, urbanity, and virtue: his tales, which are appropriate to almost every event that can occur, convey the most useful lessons; and his maxims have acquired an authority among his countrymen that render them almost equal to laws. The object of this poet and philosopher was to recommend good works to men, and justice and clemency to their rulers. In one of his admonitory odes to the former he beautifully exclaims,

"Haif bur ân ke ruft ou kâr nâ sâkht:
"Kous-e râhillet zud ou bâr nâ sâtkht."

"Alas! for him who is gone and has done no good work:
"The trumpet of march has sounded, and his load was not bound on."

In his lessons to monarchs he has the following impressive stanza:

"Rahim koon ou be fouj dir tuskheer bâsh.
"Dilhâee aullum gheer ou Shâhe Aullumgheer bâsh."

"Be merciful, and learn to conquer without an army.
"Seize the hearts of the world, and be acknowledged its legitimate sovereign."

The Persians derive their knowledge in ethics from the Grecian school. They deem Aristotle their master; and the principles of the Stagyrite are laid down as tenets, which it would be almost sacrilege to doubt. One of their most able writers in this branch of philosophy is Nasser-u-deen, who has been before mentioned*. His celebrated treatise on morals contains a series of philosophical dissertations upon wisdom, propriety of conduct, happiness, virtue, and the means of averting and of remedying evil †: but this eminent and learned man, though he has acquired great local fame for his skill in every science, was, like all his countrymen, a stranger to those wonderful improvements which have resulted from the study of experimental philosophy.

Poetry.

It has been already stated that the Persians are, as a nation, devoted to poetry. They appear at that stage of civilisation when the minds of men dwell with the most enthusiastic rapture on that enchanting branch of literature; and they can boast of poets who are worthy of all the admiration which they are so forward to grant them. In the noble epic poem of Ferdosi, which has so often been referred to in the early part of the History of Persia, the most fastidious European reader will meet with numerous passages of exquisite beauty. The narrative of this great work is generally very perspicuous; and some of the finest scenes in it are described with simplicity and elegance of diction. In the opinion of Persians

* Vide Vol. I. p. 406.

† In Persian treatises upon morality and philosophy the reader is often amused and instructed by a series of anecdotes, extracted from their biographical and historical works, which are classified so as to illustrate, by examples, every virtue and vice to which the human condition is liable.

CHAP. XXIV this poet excels in his description of the combats and battles of his heroes: but, to those whose taste is offended with hyperbole, the tender parts of his work will have most beauty, as they are freest from this characteristic defect of Eastern writers. It is, however, to be observed, that the most extravagant flights of Ferdosi do not excite that disgust which we receive on a perusal of his countless imitators; for so many of his characters are endowed with supernatural powers, that the mind is almost reconciled to hear their deeds related in a language which appears mere bombast, when used to describe the actions of beings of an inferior order.

As an epic poet, Nizâmee is deemed next in rank to Ferdosi: and the subject of his principal work, the Life of Alexander the Great, has afforded him an ample scope for all the vigour of his genius, and the richness of his imagination. Among the didactic poets of Persia, Sadi certainly ranks the highest: but it is difficult to class the numerous candidates for superiority in those mystic and lyric productions in which this nation has, in all ages, delighted. The Musnavee of Jellâl-u-deen*, the Poems of Jâmi, and the Odes

* The author of the Musnavee is generally called the Moollah of Room; while Hafiz is usually known by the title of Khaujah. The Persians conceive that the former far surpasses the latter in penetration and judgment. I have heard their opinion of these two celebrated Sooffee poets illustrated by the following anecdote.—" A learned person," they say, " was asked how it came that the author of the Musnavee and Hafiz, two " Sooffees, had expressed themselves, in the commencement of their works, so oppo- " sitely on the subject of divine love; Hafiz having said, ' The path of love appeared " at first easy, but afterwards proved full of difficulties:'—while, according to Jellâl-u- " deen, ' Love at first appeared like a murderer, that he might alarm all who were " without his pale.' The learned man replied, with a smile, ' That which the Moollah " saw at first was only found out at last by the Khaujah.'" —*Persian MS.*

of Hafiz, which have been already noticed *, are perhaps the most popular; but the names of Rudiki, Anveri, and several others, are nearly on an equal rank; and some more modern writers have attained great eminence in this favourite theme of oriental poets. Many of these poems are remarkable for harmony of numbers and luxuriance of imagination; but they all abound with the most extravagant and hyperbolical passages; and the enraptured dreams of their visionary authors can only be esteemed beauties by men whose imaginations keep pace with that of the poet, whom they deem inspired, and whose most obscure lay is often considered by their enthusiastic admirers as the gleaming of a sublime knowledge, which is far beyond the comprehension of the profane and unenlightened. Many discussions have arisen regarding the real and mystical meaning of the writers of this class, and particularly of Hafiz, whose Odes are chanted as songs, to excite the young and the dissipated to pleasure, and recited as hymns to remind the old and the devout of the rapture of divine love. It has been shown, in a former chapter, that, among many classes of Sooffees, the natural feelings which man has on earth, and the immortal longings of the soul after its Creator, are deemed inseparable: and, with a poet of this persuasion, it was likely that the subjects should be so blended, as to render it impossible to distinguish when he meant to sing of earthly or of heavenly joys.

Among the innumerable volumes of Persian poetry, we do not meet with any one of length that can be entitled a satire. This is, no doubt, to be referred to the condition of the society, which will

* Vide Vol. II. p. 399.

CHAP. XXIV not admit of that freedom of observation and expression which can alone give excellence to this species of composition. Ferdosi, under the impulse of rage and disappointment, wrote some satirical verses upon Mahmood* of Ghizni, which are only remarkable, as they show the keenness with which he felt neglect, and the bitterness of his resentment. Anveri, and several other eminent poets, have written satirical epigrams, many of which are remarkable for their point and severity. An unknown author has written a satire of some merit upon money†, as the universal passion of the human mind: but this even has no title to the name of a satirical poem.

Songs. Some of the Persian songs are very beautiful: they are chiefly composed on local subjects. Many of the lesser odes of the most celebrated poets of that country may be included among their songs, as they are set to music, and sung in all assemblies.

Music. The Persians deem music a science; but it is one in which they do not appear to have made much progress. They have a gamut and notes, and a different description of melody, that is adapted to various strains, such as the pathetic, voluptuous, joyous, and warlike: the voice is accompanied by instruments, of which they have a number: but they cannot be said to be further advanced in this science than the Indians, from whom they are supposed to have

* Vide Vol. I. page 340.

† I have seen a copy of this poem, in which almost every condition of life is described. The satirist, after giving the professed liberal objects of the persons labouring in their different vocations, concludes every character he draws with the following line:

" Hummâ uz pai een ast ke zer mee khauud."

" It is all from this, that the man wants money."

borrowed it. Their strains are often pleasing; but they are always monotonous, and want that variety of expression which gives much of its charms to this delightful art. CHAP. XXIV

Painting.

In painting the Persians appear to have advanced little within the last three centuries, for we observe several of the figures in the palaces at Isfahan, which were built in the reign of Shah Abbas, that appear as well executed as those of the most eminent of their modern artists. Their colours are very brilliant: and when they draw portraits, they usually succeed in taking likenesses. Some of their lesser drawings, which are highly glazed and painted on wood, display equal industry and taste: but they are yet unacquainted with the rules of perspective, and with those principles of just proportion which are essential to form a good painting.

From what has been said regarding the actual condition of the useful, and fine arts in Persia, we can neither pronounce that the present inhabitants of that country are in a state of progressive improvement, nor assert that they are less advanced than their forefathers. All that men have gained under a powerful and wise monarch, has been lost under his weak or barbarous successors. If a period of peace has invited intelligent strangers to the shores of this kingdom, they have been soon banished by returning war. Knowledge in Persia has hitherto ebbed and flowed with the changes in the political situation of that empire, and must continue to do so as long as its inhabitants are under the depressing influence of a despotic, and unsettled government.

CHAPTER XXV.

Observations on the Manners and Usages of the Inhabitants of Persia.

CHAP. XXV.

In an attempt to describe the manners and usages of a nation, we must commence with those exalted ranks, whose example has always so powerful an influence upon the other branches of the community. The customs and ceremonies of the Court of Persia have, within the last three centuries, undergone no substantial change. The circumstance of the reigning family being hereditary chiefs of a warlike tribe, and still preserving many of the usages of that condition, constitutes almost the only essential difference we find between their personal habits and the customs of their court, and those of the Suffavean kings, whose manners and usages have been minutely described by the numerous European travellers * who visited Persia when they occupied the throne of that kingdom.

Education of the royal princes.

It has been before stated †, that, from the period of Shah Abbas the Great, the princes of the blood were immured in the haram, where their education was intrusted to women and eunuchs; and, until the death of the king, his destined successor was unknown.

* Chardin and Kœmpfer have both minutely described the forms and manners of the Court of Persia during the period that the Suffavean kings ruled that country.

† Vol. II. page 431.

It has also been observed, that the son of the lowest slave in the haram was deemed, at that period, equally eligible to succeed to the throne as the offspring of the proudest princess. The usage of the families of Tartary has always been different. Great respect has invariably been paid by them to the birth of the mother. The cause of this is obvious. Intermarriages are deemed one of the principal means of improving the friendship, and terminating the feuds, between the tribes of that nation; and the fulfilment of this object has required, that the descendants of a high-born mother, who was a legitimate wife, should have prior claims to those of a common concubine, otherwise the relations which were established by those ties must have proved sources of discord instead of union. The Kujurs, who are proud of their Tartar, or, as they term it, Turkish origin, maintain, in this particular, the usage of their ancestors Mahomed Hussein Khan, the grandfather of the present king, when he took refuge with a Turkoman chief, proudly refused the daughter of his protector*, because she was not of sufficient high descent to give birth† to a race that were to contend for a throne: and the present king, as has been mentioned, has declared his second son, Abbas Meerza‡, the heir of his crown, on the express ground of his claims by his mother, who is a high-born female of the same tribe as the sovereign.

* Persian MS.

† It is a common saying among the Tartar tribes, that " a man should choose " his wife from a noble family, that his sons may emulate their maternal uncles."

‡ The mother of the eldest of the king's sons, Mahomed Aly Meerza, was a Georgian.

CHAP. XXV.

According to the modern usage of Persia, the princes of the blood are not immured within the walls of the haram beyond that period in which they require female attendance and maternal care. They early learn the forms of their religion; and at three or four years of age can repeat a few short prayers, and are perfect in their genuflections and mode of holding their hands when occupied in devotion. They are also most carefully instructed in all that belongs to external manner. They are taught how to make their obeisance to a superior; how to behave to a person of equal rank, or an inferior; as also the manner in which they are to stand in the presence of their father and monarch; and the way in which they are to seat themselves, if desired, and how to retire. These forms are deemed of great consequence at a court where every thing is regulated by ceremony: and it is not unusual to see a child of five years of age as perfect in his manners, and as grave in his deportment, in a public assembly, as the oldest person present. When the young prince is between seven and eight years of age, he begins to read Arabic and Persian. As soon as he understands the alphabet of the former language, he peruses the Koran; after which he learns the essential tenets of his religion. His mind is early imbued with the importance of those doctrines which distinguish the Sheah faith from that of the Soonee: and one of his first lessons teaches him to regard the latter with abhorrence. When the royal pupil is considered to be well grounded in religion, Persian books are put into his hands; and the works of Sadi, while they give him an early taste for fables and poetry, are expected to inspire his young mind with a desire of virtuous fame. He is also put through a superficial

course of grammar, syntax, logic, syllogisms, sacred law, and philosophy: but his progress in those higher branches of a Persian education depends chiefly upon his own disposition. He seldom learns more than to write and read with ease and fluency, unless inclined to study, which is not unfrequently the case, for superior attainments as a scholar* always add to his reputation. The greatest care is invariably taken to instruct Persian princes in all their bodily exercises. They are trained, while yet children, to the use of arms; and ride, when six or seven years of age, with grace and boldness. They are often betrothed when very young, and sometimes married long before they attain the age of puberty: after that period, the number of their wives and females depends upon the means which they have of supporting them. When a prince is raised to the throne, his time is divided between his public duties, the pleasures of the haram, and his amusements: the period he bestows on each of these is regulated by his peculiar inclinations, his age, and his habits. No general description, therefore, can exactly explain usages which are liable to continual changes: but a short sketch of the manner in which the reigning monarch passes his time, will convey a full idea of those habits which are deemed suited to his elevated condition.

Manner in which the king passes his time

An attention to religious duties, which no King of Persia can openly neglect, requires him to rise early. As he sleeps in the interior apartments, to which no male approaches, his attendants are either females or eunuchs. After he is dressed with their aid, he sits from one to two hours in the hall of the haram, where his

* The reigning king is said to be a good scholar. He is also a poet. I am in possession of a dewan, or book of odes, of which he is the reputed author.

CHAP. XXV. levees are conducted with the same ceremony as in his outer apartments. Female officers * arrange the crowd of his wives and slaves with the strictest attention to the order of precedency †. After hearing the reports of those intrusted with the internal government of the haram, and consulting with his principal wives ‡, who are generally seated, the monarch leaves the interior apartments. He is met, the moment he comes out, by officers in waiting, and proceeds to one of his private halls, where he is immediately joined by some of his principal favourites, with whom he enters into familiar conversation; and all the young princes of the blood attend this morning levee to pay their respects. After this is over, his majesty calls for breakfast. The preparation of all the royal meals is superintended by the chief steward of the household ‖. The viands are put into dishes of fine china §, with silver covers, and placed in a close tray, which is locked

* There are numerous female officers in the haram whose name and duties nearly correspond with those who have the care of ceremonies, and the charge of maintaining order in the public court.

† According to the best account I have been able to obtain of this ceremony, the fair strangers, if any have been brought, first pay their obeisance by a low bow, and are placed where their royal master can best view their charms. After these, the Georgian slaves and numerous mistresses are ranged before him, agreeably to their respective ranks.

‡ When the king is seated on his throne in the public hall of his haram, no one but the most favoured and highest born of his legitimate wives are allowed to sit in his presence. It is said, that two only of the wives of the present king enjoy that privilege; the mother of the heir-apparent, Abbas Meerza, and the daughter of Ibrahim Khulleel Khan, formerly chief of Sheshâh.

‖ The Persian name of this officer is Nauzir.

§ It is deemed wrong for a rigid Mahomedan to have his victuals served in dishes of silver or gold: but this rule is not always observed.

and sealed by the steward. This tray, after being covered by a rich shawl, is carried to the king, in whose presence the steward breaks his own seal, and places the different dishes before him. Some of the infant princes are generally present, and are indulged with a participation in this repast. The chief physician is invariably in attendance at every meal. His presence is deemed necessary, the Persian courtiers observe, that he may prescribe an instant remedy, if any thing he eats should disagree with the monarch: but this precaution, no doubt, originates in that suspicion which continually haunts the minds of those who exercise despotic power.

A description of the manner in which the King of Persia discharges his ordinary public duties, has been already given*. When these are performed, he usually retires to the haram, where sometimes he indulges in a short repose. His majesty always makes his appearance in the outer apartments some time before sunset, and either again attends to public business, or takes a ride on horseback. His dinner is brought between eight and nine, and the same precautions and ceremonies are used as at breakfast. He eats, like his subjects, seated upon a carpet, and the dishes are placed on a rich embroidered cloth that is spread for the occasion. It was the usage of some of the former Kings of Persia to indulge openly in drinking wine; but none of the reigning family have yet outraged the religious feeling of their subjects by so flagrant a violation of the laws of Mahomed. Bowls filled with sherbet, made of every species of fruit, furnish the beverage of the royal meals: and there are few nations where

* Vide Vol. II. page 484.

CHAP. XXV. more pains are bestowed to gratify the palate with the most delicious viands. After dinner is over, the king retires to the interior apartments, where it is said that he is often amused till a late hour by the singers and dancers of his haram. It is, however, impossible to speak of his occupations from the moment he passes the threshold of his inner palace. He is there surrounded by a scene calculated, beyond all others, to debase and degrade the human character. He only sees emasculated guards, and their fair prisoners. He hears nothing but the language of submission, or of complaint. Love cannot exist between beings so unequal as the monarch and his slave: and vanity must have overcome reason, before the fulsome adulation of pretended fondness can be mistaken for the spontaneous effusions of real attachment. The harams of the Monarchs of Persia are governed by the strictest discipline; and that must be necessary to preserve the peace of a community, where all the arrogance of power, the pride of birth, the ties of kindred, the intrigues of art, and the pretensions of beauty, are in constant collision.

The usual routine of the life of a King of Persia is often interrupted by the urgency of public affairs, and sometimes by pursuits of amusement. The reigning family have hitherto disdained those enervating and luxurious habits which led the last monarchs of the Suffavean dynasty to confine themselves to their harams. They not only, as has been stated, attend personally to public affairs, but continually practise manly exercises, and pursue field sports with all the ardour of a race of chiefs who cherish the habits of their Tartar ancestors. The present King of Persia is an expert marksman, and an excellent horseman:

CHAP. XXV.

few weeks pass without his partaking in the pleasures of the chase*.

The king's historiographer and poet.

The Monarch of Persia has always an historiographer, and a chief poet. The one writes the annals of his reign; and the other, who has a high rank at court, composes odes in his praise, and celebrates, with grateful ardour, the munificence of his royal patron. A giant and a dwarf were, at one period of the present reign, part of the royal establishment; and that is never without a jester, who enjoys a very extraordinary latitude of speech, and assumes, both in his dress and manner, the habit and appearance of folly. It is usual to laugh at the witticisms of those jesters, even when they are most severe; and the sovereign himself professes to respect their privilege. Kurreem Khan, as has been before stated†, belonged to one of the native tribes of Persia who speak a language which, from its

His jester.

* The favourite game in Persia is the deer, of which there are several kinds. That which is usually hunted is the antelope, an animal that may be termed the fleetest of quadrupeds. A common mode of hunting them is with hawks and dogs, which are trained to aid each other. Two hawks are flown when the deer is at a great distance: they soon reach it, and strike alternately at its head. This annoys and interrupts the rapid flight of the animal in so effectual a manner, that the dogs come up, and seize it. It is also usual to surround the antelope with a number of horsemen, each of whom holds a dog in a slip. When the antelope tries to escape, the object is to intercept it: and though no dog, however swift, can reach this species of deer at the commencement of the chase, it is turned out by fresh ones being continually slipped. In this mode of hunting the antelope, the object is to bring the game near the king, who usually holds in a slip a favourite dog. Hawking is a favourite amusement in Persia. Bustards, hares, herons, and partridges, are the usual game. When engaged in this sport, the king generally carries a hawk on his hand. Shooting game is also very common. It has been before stated that the Persian soldiers are excellent marksmen. This is an accomplishment which it is a disgrace not to possess.

† Vide Vol. II. page 122.

CHAP. XXV. rudeness, is universally denominated by the other inhabitants of that nation "the barbarous dialect *." This prince, as he was one day sitting in public, commanded his jester to go and bring him word what a dog, which was barking very loud, wanted. The courtiers smiled at this sally of the monarch. The jester went, as desired; and, after appearing to listen for some time with profound attention, he returned, and said, with a grave air, "Your majesty must send one "of the chief officers of your own family to report what that gentle-"man says: he speaks no language except 'the barbarous dialect,' "with which they are familiar, but of which I do not understand one "word." The good humoured monarch, we are told, laughed most heartily at this ridicule of the rude dialect of his tribe, and gave the wit a present, as the reward of his retort. This anecdote, to which many similar might be added, will show that there is little difference between the office of jester at the modern Court of Persia, and that which some centuries ago existed at every Court in Europe. A resemblance of trifling forms even merits attention, as it leads to conclusions on the progress of knowledge, and the condition of society: and we may perhaps judge as correctly from the character of their amusements, as from their more serious occupations, of the degree of civilisation that a people have attained.

His story-teller.

In the Court of Persia there is always a person who bears the name of "story-teller to his majesty;" and the duties of this office require a man of no mean acquirements. The Persians, though passionately fond of public exhibitions, have none that merit the name of theatrical entertainments: but, though strangers to the regu-

* The term is *Kuj zubân*, which literally signifies "the crooked tongue."

lar drama, the frame of their stories are often dramatic; and those whose occupation is to tell them, sometimes display so extraordinary a skill *, and such varied powers, that we can hardly believe, while we look upon their altered countenances, and listen to their changed tones, that it is the same person, who at one moment relates, in his natural voice, a plain narrative, then speaks in the hoarse and angry tone of offended authority, and next subdues the passions he has excited by the softest sounds of feminine tenderness. But the art of relating stories is, in Persia, attended both with profit and reputation. Great numbers attempt it, but few succeed. It requires considerable talent, and great study. None can arrive at eminence in this line except men of cultivated taste and retentive memory. They must not only be acquainted with the best ancient and modern stories, but be able to vary them by the relation of new incidents, which they have heard or invented. They must also recollect the finest passages of the most popular poets, that they may aid the impression of their narrative by appropriate quotations. The person whose peculiar office it is to amuse his majesty with these stories, is always

* Derveish Suffer, of Shiraz, is one of the best narrators of stories, as well as reciter of verses, that I have known in Persia. In 1800, when he was one day on the point of commencing a tale, two gentlemen rose to go away. On seeing him look disappointed, I observed to him, that the cause of their wishing to depart was owing to their inability to enjoy his story, from being unacquainted with the language in which it was to be told. "I beg they will stay," he exclaimed, "and you shall see my power "will reach them in spite of their want of knowledge of Persian." They remained; and the changes of his countenance, and the different tones in which he spoke, had the effect he expected. They were delighted with the humorous part of his narrative, and moved with the pathetic.

CHAP. XXV. in attendance. It is equally his duty to beguile the fatigue of a long march*, or to soothe the mind when it has been disturbed by the toils of public affairs: and his tales are artfully suited to the disposition of the monarch, and the humour he is in at the moment. Sometimes he recites a fable of the genii; at others, he speaks of the warlike deeds of the former Sovereigns of Persia, or recounts the love of some wandering prince. A story of more coarse materials is often framed, and the ear of the king is entertained with a narrative of low and obscene adventures.

Forms of the court.

There is no court where a more rigid attention is paid to ceremony than at that of Persia. The looks, the words, the motion of the body, are all regulated by the most strict observance of form. When the king is seated in public, his sons, ministers, and courtiers, stand erect, with their hands crossed, and in the exact place of their rank. They watch the looks of the sovereign, and a glance is a mandate. If he speaks to them, you hear a voice reply, and see their lips move, but not a motion nor gesture betrays that there is animation in any other part of their frame †. The monarch, in speaking, often uses the third person, commencing his observation with, " The king is pleased," or " The king commands." His minis-

* When I last visited Persia in 1810, I had the good fortune to be accompanied, during a part of my journey to court, by Moollah Adenâh, the story-teller to the king. He proved a most agreeable companion; and the fatigue of the longest marches was forgotten in listening to his tales.

† If the king desires to speak to a person at a distance, he commands him to advance; but this command must always be repeated several times, for the person addressed, as if fearful of coming too near, stops at every three or four steps.

ters, in addressing him, usually style him "The object of the world's "regard." They are as particular in their forms of speech as they are in other ceremonies; and superiority and inferiority of ranks, in all their shades, are implied by the terms used in the most common expressions.

On extraordinary occasions nothing can exceed the splendour of the Persian court. It presents a scene of the greatest magnificence, regulated by the most disciplined order. There is no part of the government to which so much attention is paid as the strict maintenance of those forms and ceremonies, which are deemed essential to the power and glory of the monarch; and the high officers* to whom this duty is allotted, are armed with the fullest authority, and are always attended by a number of inferiors, who carry their commands into the most prompt execution.

Ceremonies at the reception of foreign ambassadors.

The arrival of a foreign embassy is deemed one of those occasions on which the King of Persia should appear in all his grandeur. The ceremonies with which these were received, appear to have been substantially the same at every period of the history of that kingdom. The present monarch has endeavoured to vie with the most magnificent of his predecessors in his reception of those ambassadors of the European nations by whom his court has been visited. The foreign minister advances, with his suite and escort, to one of the interior gates of the palace. The moment that he reaches the precincts of the royal abode, all is complete silence. The horses even, as if trained to the scene, hardly move their heads. When he dismounts,

* The names and duties of these officers are little altered since the period of Chardin and Kœmpfer; and both these travellers have given minute accounts of them.

CHAP. XXV. he is conducted into a small apartment, where he is met by one of the principal officers of government. After being seated there for some minutes, the king is announced to be upon the throne, and the ambassador proceeds to the hall of audience. That splendid room, the floor of which is raised about eight feet from the ground, is situated in a garden, intersected by regular walks and fountains; along which, from the throne to the entrance of the gardens, the princes, ministers, nobles, courtiers, and royal guards, are arranged in their respective ranks: but the splendid appearance of these officers, who are robed in their richest habits, is eclipsed in a moment, when the eye glances at the sovereign, whose throne and dress are covered with the richest jewels. As the ambassador advances between two officers, whose gold enamelled wands are the insignia of their high stations, he is twice required to make an obeisance*. When near the throne, the lord of requests† pronounces his name, and that of the ruler by whom he is sent. The king says, in reply, "You are welcome;" and the foreign minister proceeds to take his seat in the same room, but at some distance from the king. After the ceremony of delivering the letter or credentials of the envoy is past, the polite Monarch of Persia repeats that he is welcome, and generally enters into a conversation that is calculated to make his visitor feel perfectly at ease‡, and to substitute more

* The Persian officers made a very low bow, at two appointed places, before they came to the hall in which the king was seated. I took off my hat at each of these places, and made a bow to his majesty when I entered the hall.

† The Yeshkâgâssee-bâshee.

‡ I have exactly described the ceremonies which occurred on my first visit to the King of Persia in 1800. After I had been seated a short time, the king, with a

pleasing impressions for those which the imposing pomp of the surrounding scene had inspired. If the ambassador has any presents to offer, they are (however rich) received without any appearance of gratification; for the most extraordinary works of art must not appear to excite surprise, or to fix the attention of the monarch, when they are publicly presented. The forms of his condition require that he should display an apparent indifference to all such offerings, and that he should conceal any joy, or wonder, that has been excited in his mind, till he can indulge in it without witnesses.

It has been before stated, that there are no wheel carriages * in Persia. The monarch always rides †, unless he be prevented by indisposition; and then, if forced to move, he is carried in a litter ‡, that is suspended between two mules. The tents and portable pavilions of the King of Persia are very magnificent. They are

smile on his countenance, said, "We will talk of business hereafter; but you must now "satisfy me, Captain Malcolm, of the correctness of a report I have heard, but cannot "believe. Is it true that the King of England has only one wife?" I told him it was true, and that no Christian monarch could have more. "But he has mistresses then?" he said. I replied, that the King of England was remarkable for his attention to virtue and morality, and had none. He laughed heartily, and said, he should not like to be a king where such usages prevailed. This sally of the monarch was intended to place me at my ease, and to do away the formality of a visit of introduction.

* When I visited Persia in 1810, I made the king a present of a handsome curricle, with which he was, at the moment, much delighted.

† The King of Persia has two or three elephants; and he has, for some years past, appeared seated upon one of them, when he attended the annual races at the festival of Nouroze.

‡ It is in this kind of conveyance, which is called Tukht-rowân, and upon large panniers, called Kujâwul, which are carried by camels, that the ladies of the king, who attend him when he takes the field, are conveyed.

CHAP. XXV. surrounded with a high tent wall, which encloses both the outer and inner apartments. The same forms, and the same usages, are observed when he is in the field, as when at his capital: but it is to be supposed that on active service his female train must be greatly reduced. The severe discipline of Nâdir Shah prohibited the chiefs of his army from encumbering its march with their numerous females*; and he gave himself an example of moderation that has been more praised than imitated.

The dress of the King of Persia.

The dress of the Suffavean kings was as splendid as that of the present monarch; but the costume is much changed. It is now universally the fashion in Persia to wear the beard long, and the head is covered with a cap instead of a turban. The upper part of their garments are made to fit the body very close, but the lower is invariably loose †.

His stables.

There is no part of the establishment of a Monarch of Persia to which more attention is paid than his horses. These are placed under the charge of an officer of rank, who is styled Meer-a-Khour, or "the lord of the stable." The finest colts, from every part of his kingdom, are sent to the king; and from these he selects what are deemed the best, for his own riding. The charger on which he is mounted is richly caparisoned; and a number of others, with gold embossed saddles and bits, are led before him ‡, and form, when he

* According to a MS. in my possession, he limited his chief officers to one wife when in the field, and was himself content with two.

† The Persians are much disgusted with the European usage of uncovering the head, and of wearing the lower garments tight.

‡ Every officer of rank in Persia has one or more led horses. It is, indeed, a point by which relative ranks are distinguished in that country.

is travelling, the most magnificent part of his state. It has been before mentioned *, that the stable of the king is deemed one of the most sacred of all sanctuaries. This usage continues in force; and, during the present reign, a nobleman † of the first rank in the kingdom, who had aspired to the throne, took refuge in the royal stable, and remained there till he obtained pardon for his offence. The military tribes in Persia have always regarded this sanctuary with the most superstitious reverence. — " A horse," they say, " will " never bear him to victory by whom it is violated ‡."

His observance of the forms of religion.

The Kings of Persia have always been very observant of the forms of religion. They say their prayers at the appointed hours; and as it is the habit of Mahomedans to perform this sacred duty in an open and public manner, its neglect would produce observation; and no impression could tend more to weaken their authority than a belief that they were irreligious. They sometimes attend worship in the principal mosque of the capital; and, like their subjects, pay their devotions, whenever they have an opportunity, at the sepulchres of those sainted persons who are buried within

* Vide Vol. I. page 561.

† The late Soliman Khan, Kujur, who was first cousin to the reigning king.

‡ In one Persian MS. all the misfortunes of Nâdir Meerza, the grandson of Nâdir Shah, are attributed to his having violated the honour of the stable by putting to death a person who had taken refuge there. The same writer remarks, when speaking on this subject, " The monarch or chief at whose stable a criminal takes refuge must feed " him as long as he stays there; but he may be slain the moment before he reaches it, " or that on which he leaves it; but when there, a slave who has murdered his master " cannot be touched. The place of safety," he adds, " is at the head of the horse; " and if that is tied up in the open air, the object of him who takes refuge is to touch " the head-stall."

CHAP. XXV. the limits of their dominions. As Sheahs, they profess great veneration for the memory of Aly and his sons; but not being able to visit their tombs, which are within the Turkish territories, they content themselves with sending rich presents to ornament these shrines. It is also an object of ambition to be buried at these sacred places. The body of Aga Mahomed Khan, the late King of Persia, was sent to Kerbelah, that it might be interred near the sacred precincts of the dome which canopies the remains of the sainted Imaums, Hussein and Hussun.

The observance of the Nouroze.

It has been before stated that the Eed-e-Nouroze, or "the feast "of the vernal equinox," is to this day observed with as much joy and festivity as it was by the ancient inhabitants of Persia. This single institution of former days has triumphed over that intolerant bigotry which destroyed the religion on which it was grounded; and the Mahomedans of Persia have chosen rather to be upbraided with the impious observance of what their enemies term an usage of infidels*, than abolish a feast which was so cherished by their ancestors. They have, however, discovered another reason for celebrating this day; it is the anniversary of the elevation of their favourite Aly to the high dignity of the caliphate. There are many fabulous accounts regarding the origin of the feast of Nouroze. The Guebers, or worshippers of fire, who were the former inhabitants of Persia, computed by the solar and not by the lunar system: their year was divided into twelve months; and every day of the month, as well as the month itself, had a name taken from those which they give to the angels. It was a custom of the ancient Kings of Persia,

* The Turks continually upbraid the Persians with their observance of a feast instituted by the worshippers of fire.

we are told, to dress in a particular robe each day. Scarlet, richly embroidered, or rather wove with gold, was the appointed dress for the day Hormuzd *, which was the Nouroze, or the day of the vernal equinox. Many reasons are stated, to show why the Nouroze is kept as a festival. God, one author † says, on that day began the creation, and ordered the different planets to move in their various orbits. Another writer affirms, that Jemsheed ‡ built the palace of Persepolis, and entered it on this day, which he ordered in future to be kept as a joyous feast. These and many other equally fabulous accounts, are given of the origin of this festival: but the fact is, it is the opening of the spring, the day on which winter is over, and the season of gladness commences. It is the custom of the King of Persia to march out of his capital on the Nouroze, attended by his ministers, nobles, and as many of his army as can be assembled. The ceremonies of the day commence with a review, and then the tribute and presents of all the rulers and governors of the different provinces of the kingdom

* Persian MS. † Persian MS.

‡ According to another account, equally fabulous, Jemsheed, the fourth king of the Paishdadian race, whose name was originally "*Jum*," one day pitched his jewel-ornamented throne on an eminence, in the province of Aderbijan; and, after placing the crown upon his head, sat down with his face towards the rising sun, the reflection of which, from the jewels of his crown, shed a lustre which dazzled all around, and they exclaimed "*sheed*," which means "lustre." This title of *sheed* was added to his name; and the day on which the Nouroze took place, the twenty-second of March, was termed Nouroze, and kept as a feast. It is, however, unfortunate for the author of this popular etymology, that "*jum*" should be an original Arabic word, and "*sheed*" a Persian term; and their combination, therefore, to form one name or title, is very improbable.

CHAP. XXV. are laid at the foot of the throne, which is placed in a magnificent tent, that is pitched for the purpose in an open plain. The king remains in camp several days, which are passed in joy and festivity. Horse races* are among the amusements at this period; and the monarch, whose favourite horses generally win, gives presents to the fortunate riders: he also confers dresses of honour on all the chief nobles and officers of his government, who, imitating his example, give similar marks of their regard to their servants and dependants. This feast is kept with equal demonstrations of joy over every part of the kingdom. It continues nearly a week †; but the first day is the most important. On it all ranks appear attired in their newest apparel; they send presents of sweetmeats ‡ to each other; and every man kisses his friend on the auspicious morning of the Nouroze.

* Horse-racing has always been deemed an amusement worthy of the particular patronage of the Kings of Persia; and there are annual races, not only at the capital, but at all the principal cities of the kingdom. The distance they have to run is according to the age of the horses; but it is seldom less than seven miles, or more than twenty-one. The object of these races is not so much to try the speed as the strength of the horses, and to discover those that can be depended on for long and rapid marches. The horses are always rode by boys between the age of twelve and fourteen. Mares never run at the races in Persia, nor are they used in that country for military purposes, except by the Arab tribes, who, like their brethren in Arabia, give them a preference.

† The exact time of the continuance of the festival of Nouroze does not appear fixed. The rejoicings sometimes last six days, at others only three; and those who have neither money nor time to waste in display and idleness, are content with an observance of the first day, which is that of the vernal equinox.

‡ There is, perhaps, no country where the inhabitants live so much upon sweetmeats as in Persia. Among these, the finest is that called guzangabeen, which is made

CHAP. XXV.

Banners and arms of Persia.

The Persian Kings have always attached great importance to the royal privilege of having a band of musicians, and of displaying at their festivals, and when encamped with their army, particular banners. It has been before mentioned *, that one of the standards of the ancient monarchs of this kingdom was the apron of Kâwâh, the celebrated blacksmith, who rebelled against Zohauk, and placed the virtuous Feridoon upon the throne. Subsequent to the introduction of the religion of Mahomed a variety of colours or flags have been adopted, which have in general been ornamented with symbols allusive to the deeds of that prophet or his descendants. Among these, a representation of the Zulfekâr, or two-edged sword of Aly, has been the most common: but, notwithstanding the attachment of the Persians to this sacred banner, the sovereigns of that kingdom have, for many centuries, preserved, as the peculiar arms † of their country, the sign

of the honey of the guz, or tamarisk tree, mixed with some flower and sugar. This honey is produced by an insect, or small worm, which resembles a white thread. It lies on the leaf of the tree, and appears inert. During forty days in summer the insects are brushed off the leaves every three days, and they always collect again in astonishing numbers. The guzangabeen is chiefly found in Irak. I received the above description of it from an English gentleman, who saw the insect on the tree when travelling through that province.

* Vide Vol. I. page 19.

† The causes which have led to the sign of Sol in Leo becoming the arms of Persia cannot be distinctly traced; but there is reason to believe that the use of this symbol is not of very great antiquity. We meet with it upon the coins of one of the Princes of the Seljookian dynasty of Iconium; and, when this family was destroyed by Hulakoo, the grandson of Chenghiz, it is not improbable but that prince, or his successors, adopted this emblematical representation, as a trophy of their conquest; and that it has remained ever since among the most remarkable of the royal insignia of Persia. A learned friend, who has a valuable collection of oriental coins, and whose information

CHAP. XXV.

or figure of Sol in the constellation Leo: and this device, which exhibits a lion couchant and the sun rising at his back, has not only been sculptured upon their palaces* and embroidered upon their banners†, but has been converted into an Order‡, which, in the form of gold and silver medals, has been given to those who have distinguished themselves against the enemies of their country||.

Sacred character of the power of the monarch.

The nature of absolute power requires that it should be supported by a continual revival of the impression of its high and almost sacred character. Many of the usages of Persia are calculated to produce this object: every thing connected with the royal name or authority is treated with a respect that is increased by the form

and opinion have enabled me to make this conjecture, states his belief that the emblematical representation of Sol in Leo was first adopted by Gheat-u-deen Kai Khoosroo-ben-Kaikobad, who began to reign A. H. 634, A. D. 1236, and died A. H. 642, A. D. 1244: and this emblem, he adds, is supposed to have reference either to his own horoscope, or to that of his queen, who was a princess of Georgia.

* Hanway states, Vol. I. p. 199, that over the gate which forms the entrance of the palace built by Shah Abbas the Great, at Ashrâff, in Mazenderan, are "the arms of "Persia, being a lion, and sun rising behind it."

† The emblem of the Lion and Sun is upon all the banners given to the regular corps of infantry lately formed in Persia. These are presented to the regiments with great ceremony. A moollah, or priest, attends, and implores the Divine blessing on them.

‡ This Order, with additional decorations, has been lately conferred upon several ministers and representatives of European governments in alliance with Persia.

|| The medals which have been struck with this symbol upon them have been chiefly given to the Persian officers and men of the regular corps who have distinguished themselves in the war with the Russians. An English officer who lately served with these troops informs me, that those on whom these medals have been conferred are very proud of the distinction, and that all are extremely anxious to obtain them.

which attends it. If the king sends an honorary dress, the person for whom it is intended must proceed several miles to meet it, and clothe himself in his robes of favour with every mark of gratitude and submission*. If a firmaun, or mandate, is written by the monarch to one of the officers of government, it also is met at a distance by the person to whom it is addressed; who, after raising it to his head, gives it to his secretary to read, and all stand in respectful silence till the perusal is finished. If a minister has occasion to mention the king, it is not unusual, after inserting all his titles, to leave a blank, and to write the royal name at the top of the letter, lest it should be degraded by having even a word above it. A short time ago a picture of the reigning monarch was sent to the ruler of Scind. It was enclosed in a case, and nailed down on a litter carried by two mules: but, though not visible, it was deemed entitled to the respectful homage of his subjects in those countries through which it passed. On the approach of this picture to Abusheher, the governor of that port, with all his troops and attendants, went a stage to pay his obeisance†. When it came near, they dismounted from their horses and walked forward to meet it on foot: the governor kissed the conveyance, in token of his

* The princes of the royal family are not exempted from paying this mark of respect. There is, in general, a place in the vicinity of the provincial capitals called Khelât-posh, which means "putting on the honorary dress;" to which the governor, or other officer, who receives it, must proceed, to be invested with it. The Khelât-posh, near Shiraz, is a distance of four miles on the Isfahan road.

† This occurred in January, 1810. Major C. Pasley, who was at this period residing at Abusheher in a high public station, was requested to aid at this ceremony, but he declined the invitation.

CHAP. XXV. devotion to that which it contained, and accompanied it to Abusheher, where it was welcomed with salutes; and the inhabitants of that town were commanded to show every demonstration of joy* upon this happy occasion. There can be no doubt that the whole of this ceremony was conducted in exact conformity to orders from court; for so great is the attention to minute forms in Persia, in all points connected with the king or his family, that it is usual, when they depute an officer on any public service, for some person in authority to direct, by letter †, the exact ceremonies and attentions with which he is to be received and treated.

* The trowsers and shifts of the females were exhibited on almost every house at Abusheher, as a sign of their joy. This extraordinary custom prevails among all the tribes of Arabians settled in Persia.

† The following is a translation of a letter from Mahomed Nubbee Khan, vizier to the prince, at Shiraz, to his brother, Jaaffer Khan, Governor of Abusheher, conveying instructions for his reception and treatment of the nobleman who was appointed mehmander, or "entertainer," to the mission under my charge.

"My dear brother!—Hussein Khan Kujur, who is appointed mehmander to "General Malcolm, is a nobleman of the first rank and family: he will keep you "informed of his progress. When he arrives at Dolky, fifty miles from Bushire, he "will send on this letter, and write you on the subject of his waiting upon the General. "The day he comes to camp you will proceed to meet him, attended by all the gar-"rison of Bushire, as far as the date trees on the borders of the Desert: you will "accompany him to General Malcolm's tent; and when he leaves that, you will pro-"ceed with him to his own tent, which must be pitched, as the general desires, on the "right or left of his encampment. If Hussein Khan Kujur arrive in the morning, you "will stay and breakfast with him; if in the evening, you will dine with him. Your "future attentions to him will be regulated by your politeness and good sense; and "you will always consider him as a noble guest, who should be entertained in a man-"ner suitable to his rank, and the distinguished situation to which he is appointed, of "mehmander to General Malcolm."

Ceremonies observed by viceroys, governors, &c. at the reception of a foreign ambassador.

The mode of introduction of a foreign minister at the Court of Persia has been mentioned. The forms observed in his intercourse with the viceroys of provinces and governors of cities, before he reaches the capital, are deemed equally important. The manner of meeting him before he enters a town, and the mode of his reception at the different houses that he visits, are subjects of the most serious discussion and minute arrangement. The rank and number of persons sent to welcome him, the distance they go, and the period at which they dismount, are all of importance, as they mark the exact degree of respect and consideration in which he is held: and at his first interviews with princes of the blood or nobles of high rank, the inclination of the head, the rising from the seat, the advancing to the edge of the carpet, to the door, or even beyond it, and the place where he is to be seated, are considered as forms of the utmost consequence, and are therefore always settled by previous agreement. Ceremonies of this kind have every where some importance; but they are most attended to by nations who, like Persia, have no correct knowledge of the character and condition of distant countries, and whose impressions are chiefly formed from the appearance and conduct of those by whom they are represented. If an ambassador assumes great state, the nation he represents is considered to be wealthy and powerful: if he exacts attention, and resents the slightest neglect, his monarch is believed to be lofty and independent, and worthy of that friendship which he disdains to court by any sacrifice of dignity or of honour; while a contrary proceeding on the part of a public representative is certain to lead to opposite conclusions. It is not unusual to

CHAP. XXV. hear a Persian nobleman or minister pass an eulogium on the extraordinary knowledge, firmness, and spirit, of an ambassador of his own country, or of a foreign state: and when you expect to be told of some remarkable negotiation or treaty that he concluded, you are informed, that his great knowledge was displayed in not being overreached in some point of form, and that his firmness had withstood every effort to make him contented with one shade less of attention, than he thought his due. The conduct of individuals on these occasions is deemed connected, not only with their own fame, but that of their country: and the best Persian historians have recorded, with honour, the names of the ambassadors who have been most alive to what their station demanded on these essential points of etiquette. We may complain of all this, and deem it at variance with sound reason, which considers substance more than form, and is better pleased with manly simplicity than vain pomp and display: but it would be as rational to expect that the Persians should understand, on first hearing it, the beauties of our language, as that they should appreciate, at the first stages of our intercourse with them, the superior value of our customs. Besides, in a community where every thing is personal*, high rank must, to support itself, always assume an imposing attitude. The natives of the East term the gorgeous magnificence which surrounds their kings and chief rulers "the clothing of the state†."—"You

* When I have spoken to sensible Persians regarding the opposite nature of their government and institutions to those of England, I have always received the same answer: *Kâr-e-shoomâ bâ hikmut ust; kâr-e-mâ bâ zât*; i. e. "With you every thing is "by science, or systematic; with us, every thing is personal."

† Lebâs-e-dowlut.

"may speak to the ears of others," was the reply of a very sensible Persian to an European gentleman, who asked him some question upon this subject; "but if you desire to be understood by my coun-"trymen, you must address their eyes."

The princes, nobles, ministers, and high public officers of Persia, imitate the king in many of their usages. All the respect they pay to him they exact from their inferiors: each of them in his rank has what may be termed a petty court; the forms of which are regulated in nearly the same manner, and by officers bearing the same names, as those who attend the monarch. Every chief, or officer of elevated station in Persia, has his haram, his secretaries, his officers of ceremonies, his master of horse, and sometimes his poet and his jester; and in his house, all matters of ceremony are regulated with as strict an attention to punctilio as at the palace of the sovereign. This class of men, sensible of the precarious nature of their condition, appear alike desirous of obtaining money and of spending it. They seem eager to crowd into their hour of good fortune all the enjoyment they can. They lavish their wealth in a manner not dissimilar to those of the same rank in other countries: women, horses, rich arms, and dress, are the principal objects of their desire. Their splendid apartments are ornamented with rich carpets, and are generally so situated as to be perfumed by flower gardens, and refreshed by fountains. One of their pleasures is to sit in these apartments to enjoy their coffee and tobacco, and feast their friends. It is the habit with the ministers of the Persian court to breakfast and dine almost every day in a large party. Their meals are always abundant, and sometimes sumptuous; and it is not

CHAP. XXV. unusual to invite persons of the most unequal condition to partake of them *.

The higher ranks among the inhabitants of Persia are in general educated in exactly the same manner as the princes of the blood; and they are most carefully instructed in all that belongs to exterior manner and deportment. Nothing can exceed their politeness: and in their social hours, when formality is banished, their conversation is delightful. It is enlivened by anecdotes; and their narratives and observations are improved by quotations of beautiful passages from their best poets, with whose works almost every Persian who possesses any intelligence is acquainted.

The chiefs of military tribes may be termed the hereditary nobility of Persia. The monarch, as has been stated, may, by his influence or direct power, alter the succession, and place an uncle in the situation of a nephew, and sometimes put a younger brother in the condition of an elder: but the leader of the tribe must be of the family of their chiefs. The title of khan, or lord, is conferred upon such persons as a matter of course. When a son is born to a noble of high rank, he is often honoured with this title when his birth is announced at

* I have dined with the Prime Minister of Persia when nobles of the highest rank, inferior meerzas, or clerks, merchants, mendicant poets, and astrologers, have been of the party. When Captain Stewart, Secretary to the British Mission that visited Persia in 1810, was sitting with the present minister, Hajee Mahomed Hussein Khan, in his tent, a poor old countryman brought three combs for sale. The Hajee examined them, and was settling the price as breakfast was served up: he left off making the bargain; but, with that condescending affability for which he is celebrated, desired the peasant to sit down and take his breakfast, which he did at the same *fursh* (or cloth on which the dishes are placed,) with the minister.

court. The younger sons or nephews of a chief seldom receive it till they are enrolled in the king's guards, or have performed some service. This class of men are most tenacious of their descent: and the succession is regulated by attention to the rank and birth of the mother. The son of the khan of a military tribe by a concubine is never placed on a footing with his legitimate offspring: an attempt made by parental fondness to do so, would be resented by the relations of his legitimate wives, and would outrage the feelings of his tribe*. The manners of this class, even when softened by long residence at court, always retain a good deal of haughtiness. They are (with some remarkable exceptions,) not so polished and well educated as the civil officers of the court; and much of their time is devoted to martial exercises and field sports.

The ministers of state in Persia, and the secretaries of the various departments of government, generally bear the name of meerza. This term, which is a contraction of two words, signifies the son of an ameer, or lord; but at present it does not, when prefixed to a name†, denote high birth. It may be translated civilian, as it

* I had an opportunity of observing this custom on many occasions. In 1810, when I visited Mehrab Khan, the chief of a small branch of the Affshar, at his family residence, two of his sons, very richly dressed, were introduced: the eldest was between eight and nine years of age. When we were seated, a fine boy, between twelve and thirteen, in plain clothes, seated himself at a distance, below the other boys. I asked the khan who he was? "He is my son," said he, "and he is a fine lad; but his "mother was only a jeweller's daughter, to whom I was not regularly married. The "other boys are descended from a high-born mother, and are consequently my heirs."

† The word meerza is derived from *meer*, or *ameer*, "lord," and *za*, a contraction of *zada*, "soft." When it follows the name, instead of being prefixed, meerza always denotes a prince of the blood royal.

CHAP. XXV. implies complete civil habits: all who assume it are understood to have been well brought up, and to devote themselves to those duties that require education *. They should be able to read and write well, to keep accounts, and be thoroughly versed in all the rules and forms of epistolary correspondence, which are considered by men of rank in Persia to be as essential as the ceremonies that regulate their personal intercourse. Meerzas are in general citizens, though sometimes they belong to warlike tribes. The fact is, every person who has received the slightest education, and who prefers, for any reason, civil occupation to military, becomes a meerza, and is a candidate for the employments usually given to persons of this description. These employments are very numerous; for every officer in the army, every magistrate of a village, has his meerza. This class, who may be said to fill the highest and the lowest offices in the government, are usually distinguished by wearing a kullumdân (or small case which contains pens and ink,) in their girdle; and they seldom, however wealthy, dress with equal splendour, or assume the same state and equipage, as the chiefs of tribes. Their manners are, from their occupation, mild and polite; and we meet with some of them who are highly polished and accomplished. The Meerzas of Persia are, generally speaking, careful not to offend the rude arrogance of the tribes of that country, by an adoption of their habits. It is unusual for them to follow the sports of the

* A meerza may be called a man of business. Some of this class are men of learning, which is certainly not required to qualify them for their occupations. Learning and science, which always imply a knowledge of Arabic, are deemed more necessary and appropriate accomplishments for the moollahs, or higher classes of priesthood.

field, or to practise martial exercises; and they hardly ever pretend to military skill: but their modesty does not prevent their being treated with slight, if not contempt, by haughty nobles, to whom their relation appears not dissimilar to that in which the clerks of ancient Europe stood to the knights and barons under the feudal system. To relieve them from this degradation, the monarch often raises them to the dignity of khan: but they are looked upon as a mere court nobility; and the lowest chieftain of a clan considers himself superior in real rank to the most favoured meerza.

The priesthood of Persia have few distinct usages. Their occupation enjoins plainness of dress, and forbids the vanity and display to which other persons in this country are so much attached. They are almost all Syuds, an appellation which marks their claim to a descent from the prophet of Arabia. It has been before stated, that the lower ranks of this class are seldom so much entitled to respect as the higher; and the order of priesthood in Persia is degraded by a crowd of persons, who are, or pretend to be, Syuds, assume the name of Hajee, (a term which denotes "a pilgrim to "Mecca,") as also that of Moollah, or "learned man;" and beg, or rather demand alms, on the ground of their holy character. These persons, who are remarkable for their low cunning and impudence, may be said to live upon the charity of the other classes of the community, by whom they are in general feared and despised. In every tale in which roguery is described, we meet with the name of a Moollah, Syud, or Hajee. A Persian writer, who makes some severe remarks upon these holy mendicants, relates*, that a man purchased

* Persian MS.

CHAP. XXV. a fine bunch of grapes of a person who sat behind a small window. After he had paid his money, he took hold of the end of the bunch, but, in pulling it through the lattice, every grape fell on the inside, and he held nothing but the bare stalk. "Oh Syud! O Moollah! "O Hajee!" he exclaimed. The man within instantly opened the door, and said, "You know me then, my friend?"—"I never saw "you before," said the person to whom he addressed himself; "but "I was quite convinced no one that had not a right to all these "sacred titles could ever have played me such a trick." Anecdotes of this character are repeated in every company in Persia: and this circumstance alone proves, that though many of the priesthood are respected on account of their personal merit, they do not, as a body, enjoy that consideration which they possess in some other Mahomedan nations. But the respect which is denied to the order, as a body, is granted to individuals. The estimation in which the principal Mooshtâheds, or "high priests of Persia," are held, has been before noticed. The most powerful, as well as the weakest of the monarchs of that country, have equally sought to conciliate their good opinion. We read, in the History of Abbas the Great, that a person complained to Moollah Ahmed, the Moostâhed of Ardebil, that the king had taken his sister by force into his haram. The holy man immediately gave him a note to the following effect: "Brother Abbas, restore to the bearer his sister." The king commanded the woman to be instantly given up; and, showing the note he had received to his courtiers, said aloud, "Let "this be put into my shroud: for, on the day of judgment, having "been called brother by Moollah Ahmed will avail me more than "all the actions of my life." The most cruel of the successors of

Abbas were only merciful at the solicitation of the chief priests of their kingdom. Aga Mahomed Khan allowed them to approach him when no others dared to come near; and they sometimes pleaded with success for those whom he had doomed to destruction. The reigning monarch has shown them even greater attention than his predecessor: and as long as they continue to abstain from any concern in political affairs, and to disregard worldly honours and wealth *, they will, in all probability, preserve the influence which they have established.

There are a number of persons in Persia who pursue their studies till they are entitled to the name of Moollah, and to all the honours of a Persian college, without classing themselves with the priesthood. These follow various occupations. Some devote themselves wholly to study: and to the most eminent of those who follow literary pur-

* It has been before stated, that this class avoid intercourse with persons high in station: and they are not forward to cultivate the acquaintance of foreigners: but this does not always arise from those motives of bigotry to which it is usually imputed. When I was at Shiraz, in 1800, I understood that Shaikh-ul-Islâm, or "chief judge of the court of Sherrâh, or written law," in that city, had weak sight, and wished to have a pair of spectacles. I immediately made him a present of a pair handsomely mounted; but they were returned, with a request that one of less value might be sent. The desire of the chief judge was complied with: and when I some time afterwards met him by accident, he said to me, "You must have been "surprised at my giving you so much trouble about a trifle; and, I fear, you will "think that I showed an unnecessary affectation of humility in the choice of spec-"tacles: but, in my situation," he added, "every trifle has importance; and I must "not give the slightest grounds for suspicion of my being actuated by those motives of "cupidity that are so common to my countrymen. It is this consideration," he continued, with polite kindness, "that has prevented my cultivating your acquaintance so "much as I desired."

CHAP. XXV. suits a very high rank in society is assigned. An author, who has acquired any fame as an historian, an astronomer, or a poet, is respected by all ranks, and has a place of distinction given him in every company in which he mixes. Every prince and noble in Persia desires to be considered a patron of genius; and this feeling secures to men of learning a very fair share in the enjoyments of the community among which they live. They are not only esteemed on account of their real or supposed talents as authors, but as agreeable companions. Their reading furnishes them with anecdotes, which amuse and instruct; and some of them are alike remarkable for the excellence of their composition, and the sprightliness of their conversation. Even the common pretenders among this class, who are very numerous, are in general men of good manners and ready wit.

A very slight knowledge of astronomy is sufficient to allow a Persian student to profess the occult science of judicial astrology. If a person can take an altitude with an astrolâbe, knows the names of the planets, and their different mansions, and of a few technical phrases, and understands the astrological almanacks that are annually published, he deems himself entitled to offer his services to all who wish to consult him; and that includes every person in Persia who has the means to reward his skill. Nothing is done by a man of any consequence, or property, without reference to the stars. If any measure is to be adopted, if a voyage or journey is to be commenced, if a new dress* is to be put on, the lucky or

* When at Teheran, in 1800, I was surprised to see the prime minister, Hajee Ibrahim, with whom I lived, consulting a Persian regarding a fortunate moment for putting on a new dress. On seeing me smile, he said, " Do not think, Captain

CHAP. XXV.

unlucky moment must be discovered, and the almanack and astrologer are consulted. A person wishing to commence a journey will not allow a fortunate day to escape, even though he is not ready to set out. He leaves his own house at the propitious moment, and remains, till he can actually proceed, in some incommodious lodging in its vicinity; satisfied that he has, by quitting his home, secured all the benefit which the influence of good stars can afford him.

Some years ago*, when a Persian ambassador was about to proceed to India, he was informed by his astrologer of a most fortunate conjunction of the stars, which, if missed, was not likely to occur again for some months. He instantly determined, that though he could not embark, as the ship was not ready that was to carry him, to move from his house, in the Town of Abusheher, to his tents, which were pitched at a village five miles off to receive him. It was, however, discovered by the astronomer, that he could neither go out of the door of his own dwelling, nor at the gate of the fort, as an invisible, but baneful constellation † was exactly opposite, and shed dangerous influence in that direction. To remedy this, a large aperture was made in the wall of his house; but that only opened into his neighbour's; and four or five more walls were to be cut through before the ambassador and his friends (which

" Malcolm, I am such a fool as to put faith in all this nonsense; but I must not make " my family unhappy by refusing to comply with forms which some of them deem of " consequence."

* This occurred in 1806. I write from the MS. Journal of Mr. Jukes, who was upon the spot, and an eye-witness of all that is stated.

† The Persians call this invisible constellation Sukiz Yeldoz. It consists of a cluster of eight stars.

CHAP. XXV. included the principal men who were to accompany him) could reach the street. They then went to the beach; where it was intended to take a boat, and proceed two miles by sea, in order that their backs might be turned on the dreaded constellation: but the sea was rough, and the party hesitated encountering a real danger in order to avoid an imaginary one. In this dilemma, the governor was solicited to allow a part of the wall of the town to be thrown down, that a mission, on which so much depended, might not be exposed to misfortune. The request, extraordinary as it may appear, was complied with, and the cavalcade marched over the breach to their tents. The astrologer rode near the ambassador, that he might continually remind him of the great importance of keeping his head in one position; and, by his aid, he reached his tents without any occurrence that could tend to disturb the good fortune which was augured to result from his having departed from home at the propitious moment. The ambassador's conduct in this instance, while it satisfied his own mind, met, no doubt, with the highest approbation of the court, and it gave confidence to his attendants*; for, as has been before stated, the natives of

* When I visited Teheran in 1800, I found that almost all the Persians in my camp were satisfied that the success or failure of my mission would depend, in no slight degree, upon my entering the capital at a fortunate moment. One of my Persian secretaries, who had consulted an astrologer, rode near me, as I approached the gateway, with a watch in his hand; and as I did not refuse to gratify him, by moving, in a slight degree, quicker or slower as he wished, my horse stept over the threshold of the gateway at the very instant desired. The circumstance gave great joy to all the Persians who were friendly to the mission, as they anticipated more success from my attention to this trifle, than from all the other efforts I could make.

Persia, from the highest to the lowest, have faith in this delusive science. It is, however, to be remarked, that many of those whose occupation is to observe the aspect of the stars, and to calculate nativities, are not the dupes of their own knowledge. Their object is gain; and they make their art subservient to that object. They flatter the ruling passion of those who consult them; and if apparently compelled to forebode misfortune, it is often with no other view than to point out how it may be averted*. CHAP. XXV.

* When on my return from Teheran in 1800, I accidentally fell into company with an astrologer, who insisted upon taking my horoscope, and foretelling my destiny. After the usual forms and calculations, he acquainted me, that on my voyage to India I should meet with a violent storm; and, after escaping it, should be made a prisoner. I observed, that it was fortunate I had no belief in his skill, otherwise I should be unhappy, from that moment, in contemplating misfortunes, from which I concluded there was no escape. There I was mistaken, he said: and, to satisfy me of the manner in which misfortune was to be averted, he would relate an anecdote. "Jesus," said he, "when sitting at the gate of Jerusalem, beheld a wood-cutter pass out of the city, "carolling as he went along. 'How ignorant man is of his destiny!' said the son of "Mary to his disciples. 'That poor fellow, who appears now so happy, will to day "perish in the wood.' When evening came, however, the man returned, singing "louder than before. The disciples looked at each other, and at their master. Jesus, "reading their thoughts, said, 'O ye of little faith! you doubt my knowledge: but "know, that the man whom you see carried only one small loaf of bread for his dinner; "and when entreated by a person in distress to afford him relief, he gave him half his "loaf. God, pleased with this act, saved his life. But go,' added the prophet, 'and "examine the bundle of wood that he carries, and you will find there the very snake "which was appointed to cause his death.' They went, and saw with wonder the "snake, as Jesus had told them. You see," said the astrologer, addressing himself to me, "how it is possible to avert the decrees of the stars." I could not refuse that trifling reward to my companion's ingenuity, which I had been prepared to deny to his pretended skill.

The poets of Persia are still greater flatterers than the astrologers: but their occupation, for it may be termed one, is less profitable. A few fortunate votaries of the muses enjoy the smiles of fortune: but the great majority of poets in Persia, as in other countries, are poor; and, from their numbers, it is impossible it should be otherwise. Every person who has received a moderate education, may, if he prefers a life of idleness to one of industry, assume the name of a poet; and the merest rhymer receives some additional respect from being called by that honoured appellation. While some favoured poets of Persia are chanting the wonderful deeds of the king, or of the principal chiefs; or composing dewans, or "collections of odes," on the mystical subject of divine love; others are contented with writing panegyrics on the virtues, wisdom, bravery, and discernment, of all those who bestow their bounty upon them, or allow them to partake of the good things of their table. They also make epigrams to amuse their patrons; and are alike ready to recite their own verses, or to show their knowledge by quoting the finest passages of the poetry of their country. The facility with which a Persian can obtain a certain degree of education at the colleges in the principal cities of the empire, and that indulgence to which the usages of these seminaries invite, produces a swarm of students, who pass their useless lives in indolence and poverty. Isfahan, in particular, abounds with these literary mendicants: and it is chiefly from the scholars educated at its colleges, and those at Shiraz, that the kingdom is inundated with vagrant poets, who lie in wait, not only for the high officers and wealthy men of their native country, but for all strangers whose rank or appearance afford them the slightest prospect of a return for their venal lays. A professed ignorance of their language, or the

expression of dislike for their productions, is no defence against their craving importunity, and unconquerable assurance. A poet, who came fifty miles from Shiraz, to welcome me*, with a complimentary ode, beautifully written upon ornamented paper, was told, in order to evade his purpose, that the person he had so praised could hardly comprehend his lines, and had no taste for such compositions. " I must tell him a story, then," said the unabashed poet, " which will show him how little necessary the knowledge " and taste which he wants, is to the fulfilment of my object.— " Some years ago," said he, " when the Affghans had possession of " Persia, a rude chief of that nation was Governor of Shiraz. A " poet composed a panegyric upon his wisdom, his valour, and his " virtues. As he was taking it to the palace, he was met by a friend " at the outer gate, who inquired where he was going. He in- " formed him of his purpose. His friend asked him, if he was " insane, to offer an ode to a barbarian, who hardly understood a " word of the Persian language. ' All that you say may be true,' " said he; ' but I am starving, and have no means of livelihood but " making verses. I must therefore proceed.' He went, and stood " before the governor with the ode in his hand. ' Who is that fel- " low?' exclaimed the Affghan lord; ' and what is that paper which " he holds?'—' I am a poet,' replied the man; ' and the paper con- " tains some poetry.'—' What is the use of poetry?' said the chief. " —' To render great men, like you, immortal,' he replied, making at " the same time a very profound bow. ' Let us hear some of it.' " The poet, on this mandate, began to read his composition aloud;

* This occurred on my first mission to Persia, in A. D. 1800.

CHAP. XXV. "but he had not finished the second stanza, when he was interrupted. "'Enough!' exclaimed the governor. 'I understand it all. Give "the poor man some money; that is what he wants.' The poet re-"ceived his present, and retired, quite delighted. He met his friend "at the door, who, the moment he came out, accosted him again. "'You are, no doubt,' he observed, 'now convinced of the folly of "carrying odes to a man who does not understand one word of "them.'—'Not understand!' he replied; 'you are quite mistaken. "He has, beyond all men I ever met, the quickest apprehension of "a poet's meaning.'" This story produced, in part, that effect which the travelling poet had expected from his ode: but the notice he received had the common effect of exciting, instead of allaying cupidity; and the witty rhymer made several ingenious, but unsuccessful efforts, to obtain further liberality.

The art of printing is unknown in Persia; and beautiful writing, therefore, is considered a high accomplishment. It is carefully taught in the schools, and those who excel in it are almost classed with literary men. They are employed to copy books; and some have attained to such eminence in this art, that a few lines written by one of these celebrated penmen are often sold for a considerable sum *.

The merchants of Persia are all taught to read and write, and some of them are men of learning. Their better acquaintance with foreign countries, while it renders them free from prejudice, adds greatly to their knowledge: and their manners, though not so

* I have known seven pounds given for four lines written by Dervish Musjeed, a celebrated penman, who has been dead some time, and whose beautiful specimens of writing are now scarce.

highly polished as those of the principal nobility and courtiers, are in general equal, if not superior, to the other classes of the community in which they live. Though the society of merchants of information and education is courted by the first nobles and the highest officers of the Persian government, the former, in general, endeavour to avoid any political connexions: and the observance of this rule is recommended by the almost invariable ruin of all those who are deluded to forsake the path of profit to pursue that of ambition.

It is a peculiar usage of the principal merchants in Persia to carry on all their mercantile correspondence in cipher, and every person has a different one. The causes for this extraordinary precaution are obvious. In a country where there are no regular posts, they are under the necessity of trusting their letters to couriers, whom a small sum would bribe to betray their secrets to commercial rivals, and it is of great consequence to their interests that they should have the first intelligence of political changes, respecting which their correspondent would fear to write in an open manner. In Persia, the authenticity of a merchant's letters, as well as his bills, depends entirely upon the seal. It is not usual to sign either; and they are not often written in the hand of the person by whom they are sent. It is the seal, therefore, which is of importance: it has always engraven upon it the name and title, if he has one, of the person to whom it belongs, and the date at which it was cut. The occupation of a seal-cutter is one of much trust and some danger: he keeps a register of every seal he makes; and if one is stolen or lost by the party to whom he sold it, his life would answer the crime of making another exactly the same. He must affix the real date on which it is cut: and the person to whom

CHAP. XXV. the seal belongs, if in business, is obliged to take the most respectable witnesses of the occurrence, and to write to his correspondents, declaring all accounts and deeds with his former seal null from the day upon which it was lost.

Among the lower classes of the citizens of Persia there is not much perceptible difference of manner. That which exists arises from the nature of their respective occupations, and from the partial diffusion of knowledge. Almost all the tradesmen, and many of the mechanics, have received some education. There are schools* in every town and city of Persia, in which the rudiments of the language of that country, and of Arabia, are taught. The child who attends at one of these seminaries, after he has learnt the alphabet, is made, as a religious duty, to read the Koran, in Arabic; which he usually does without understanding one word of it. He is next taught to read some fables in the Persian language, and to write a legible hand: here his education commonly ends; and unless he is led by inclination to devote himself to study, or his occupation requires that he should practise what he has learnt, the lessons he has received are soon forgotten. But this course of education, slight and superficial as it may seem, has the effect of changing the habits, and of introducing a degree of refinement among those who benefit by it, which is unknown to their ruder countrymen.

* The schools in Persia have been particularly described by Chardin, and other travellers. They are sufficiently reasonable to admit of the poorest tradesman sending his children to them; but are often under the management of ignorant pedants. It is not to be expected that a government like that of Persia should ever pay attention to the education of its subjects, though that is evidently the root from which all improvement must spring.

The Persians of all conditions are fond of society. Their table is in general well furnished; as the extraordinary cheapness of provisions of every kind, and the great plenty of fruit, enable even the lowest order of citizens to live well. The hog is the only animal whose flesh they are positively forbidden to eat*. They are also, as Mahomedans, prohibited from tasting wine: but this rule is often broken; and as, to use their own phrase, "there "is equal sin in a glass as in a flaggon," they usually, when they drink, indulge to excess. They are, indeed, so impressed with the idea that the sole pleasure of this forbidden liquor is centred in its intoxicating effects, that nothing but constant observation can satisfy them that Christians are not all drunkards. "It is," they often remark, when speaking to a person of that persuasion, "one of the privileges of your religion to be so, and "therefore neither attended with shame nor disgrace." An English officer belonging to a frigate had come on shore at Abusheher, and mounted a high spirited horse to take a ride†. The awkwardness of the rider, who was nearly falling at every bound the animal took, amused a great number of spectators. Next day a Persian, who supplied the vessel with fruit and vegetables, came off, and seeing the officer, said to him, "I have saved your reputation; not a man of "those who laughed at you yesterday has the least suspicion that "you are a bad horseman."—"How have you managed that?" said the gentleman he addressed.—"I told them," he replied, "that you,

* There are several other meats, such as the hare, &c. which are deemed improper to be eaten.

† This occurred when I was at Abusheher, in A. D. 1810.

CHAP. XXV. "like every Englishman, rode admirably, as became a nation of "soldiers, but that you were very drunk, and that alone was the "reason of your not keeping your seat upon the saddle so firmly as "you otherwise would have done." If an endeavour is made to remove these impressions by telling them that, though we are permitted to use wine, excess is always considered as degrading, and often, when it incapacitates for duty, as criminal, they listen with a smile of incredulity; for they believe it impossible that men, who are not withheld by motives of a religious nature, can deny themselves what they are led by the restraint imposed upon them to deem one of the most delightful of all enjoyments.

The Persians wear hardly any under-linen; and among the lower classes the clothes they once put on are seldom taken off till worn out. Nothing could preserve the health of a people, with such habits, but those ablutions that are enjoined by their religion, and the constant use of the hummums, or hot-baths, which are to be found in every city, town, and village of Persia. Some of these buildings are very splendid; and they are almost always clean, and well supplied with fresh water. A few pieces of the smallest copper coin of the country enables the poorest traveller, or labourer, to indulge in this delightful luxury, which, independent of its salubrity, refreshes the spirits, and dissipates the effects of the most severe fatigue.

Amusements. The nature of the public amusements in Persia has been noticed. The lower classes are entertained by the same exhibitions as the higher. Illuminations, fire-works, wrestlers, jugglers, buffoons, puppet-shows, musicians, and dancing-boys, amuse all ranks at public feasts: while riding on horseback, visiting, walking in gardens,

and sitting in groupes at their houses, or under the shade of a tree, to listen to a tale or poem, are the usual occupations of their idle hours. Dancing-girls were once numerous in Persia; and the first poets of that country have celebrated the beauty of their persons and the melody of their voices. They continued to form a part of the amusement at every entertainment till the reigning family ascended the throne; but at present they are not allowed at court, and are seldom seen, except in provinces at a distance from the capital *.

Condition and treatment of the women of Persia.

There is no consideration of more consequence, as connected with the condition and character of a people, than the laws and customs which regulate the relative situation and intercourse of the sexes. On it, perhaps, beyond all other causes, depends the moral state of a country, and its progress in general improvement. Many nations, who have allowed their women to be publicly seen, have still remained in a barbarous state †; but there is no instance of the inhabitants of a country in which it was the custom to immure them, and to deny them the benefit of education, ever having attained a forward rank in civilized life. The influence of women, where they hold their just station in society, is not more calculated to soften the rough manners and to subdue the angry passions of man, than to stimulate him to generous, brave, and noble actions. The admiration of highly cultivated females is more rarely given to personal beauty, than to valour, virtue, and talent; and the

* Dancing-girls are still to be met with in Kurdistan, and in parts of Khorassan.

† Among the wandering tribes the females are unveiled. The lower classes among the Mahomedans in India do not veil; and the late Captain Grant, who travelled through Mekran in 1809, states, "that it is not the custom in that country for the "women to veil."

CHAP. XXV.

hope of obtaining it constitutes one of the purest and highest motives to good and great actions. It has been before stated, that the religion of Mahomed sanctions, if it does not inculcate, usages which keep the female sex in a subservient state. The followers of this faith, therefore, may be pronounced to be strangers to this refined but powerful motive of human action. In Persia the lower classes deem females important in proportion as they are useful in domestic duties: the higher consider them as born for their sensual gratification. Women have, in fact, no assigned place in this community, but are what their husbands, or rather lords, may choose to make them. A favourite may, by the power of her mental or personal charms, establish an influence over her domestic tyrant; or she may obtain peculiar respect on account of her superior birth, and the consequent dread which her husband entertains of her relations. Other ties may produce still more remarkable effects: and habit and affection combined may lead a son to continue an attention or obedience to his mother, that gives her an importance beyond the walls of the haram. But these rare instances, though they sometimes form women of superior knowledge and character, can have no effect in counteracting the evil consequences which their total exclusion from society has upon the manners and morals of men.

Indulgence in an unlimited number of females.

The natives of Persia, like all Mahomedans, consider themselves entitled to an unlimited indulgence in the pleasures of the haram: and though they are restrained, by religious considerations, from marrying more than four wives, they conceive themselves at liberty to increase the number of females in their family to any extent that suited their inclination, or their convenience. The priesthood are expected to be the most moderate in their use of the indulgence

granted by their prophet: and we may judge of their habits, by the remark of a very grave historian*, who, after an animated eulogium upon the character of a priest of high reputation, concludes by observing, that "the continence of this virtuous man was so extra-"ordinary, that it is affirmed, that during his life he never had inter-"course with any other females except his four legitimate wives!!"

Ceremonies and usages of marriage.

The Persians are entitled, by law and usage, to take females, not within the prohibited degrees of kindred, in three different ways: by marriage, by purchase, and by hire. Their marriages are made according to prescribed forms. The female is betrothed† by the parents: she may, however, refuse her consent when the priest comes to require it; and the marriage cannot proceed if she continues averse to it: but this rarely happens, as the parties never see one another before they are united, and seldom hear any reports of each other but what are favourable. A woman has this, and many other rights, according to the Mahomedan law: but a being, who is first immured by her parents, and afterwards by her husband, and whose name it is almost a crime to pronounce, can practically have little protection from these useless privileges. The nuptial ceremony must take place before two or more witnesses‡. The contract

* Sherift-u-deen, author of "The History of Kurdistan."

† Persons, both male and female, are often betrothed in infancy. If this is done by their parents, the marriage must be confirmed when they attain the age of puberty: but if by any other than parents, the most respectable Mahomedan doctors maintain it is null, if either both, or one of the parties desire that it should be cancelled.—*Commentary on Mahomedan Law,* Vol. I. page 102, 103.

‡ There must be two male witnesses, or one man and two women. These must be freemen, sane, adult, and Mahomedans.—*Commentary on Mahomedan Law,* Vol. I. page 74.

CHAP. XXV. of marriage is regularly made out by an officer of the law, who attends. It is then attested and given to the female, who preserves it with great care, for it is also the deed by which she is entitled to her dower*, which is the principal part of her provision in the event of her husband's death, and her sole dependance† if she is divorced. Marriages in Persia, as in all eastern countries, are very expensive. It is not unusual for a man to waste the means he has spent his life in acquiring on his nuptial day. They connect their display upon this occasion with their personal reputation, and endeavour to surpass their equals with a ruinous spirit of emulation.

* There is no point deemed of more consequence by the Mahomedan law than the dower. The most learned doctors have, however, disagreed widely regarding its interpretation. A marriage, some hold, is valid, even though there is no dower; but in such cases, as also where an excessive one has been agreed upon, the law may interpose and settle it upon just and rational principles. The lowest dower that can be legally given is ten dirhems, or between four and five shillings.—*Commentary on Mahomedan Law*, Vol. I. page 122.

† The right of the female to this settlement is guarded, not only by law and usage, but by the protection of her male relations, who are in general the witnesses. It is made payable from the property of the husband; and if he has none, the wife's portion is secured upon whatever he may hereafter possess. The dower is made over to the female, or her assigns, before the consummation of the marriage. It becomes her entire right: and it is not unusual for a mother to give a favourite son her dower; which he can, when vested with her authority, compel his father to pay. The law regarding dower constitutes, as was no doubt intended, a considerable check upon the men of every Mahomedan nation; and it is one of which the women of Persia are very jealous. A woman, according to the Mahomedan law, may exonerate her husband from any part, or even from the whole, of the dower. There are, however, rare instances of the whole being restored, though the wife sometimes gives up a part at the earnest solicitation of the husband, or his friends.

A Persian may purchase as many female slaves as he likes; and their condition is in no degree altered by the manner in which they live in his family. The sweeper of his house, and the partner of his bed, are alike exposed to be sold again if they have been purchased: but this right is seldom exercised, as it is at variance with that jealous sense of honour which almost all Mahomedans entertain regarding females with whom they have cohabited. CHAP. XXV.

Marriage by contract.

The marriage by contract, and for a limited period, is peculiar to the citizens of Persia. It is said to have been a custom in Arabia when Mahomed first introduced his religion into that country: but though the prophet tolerated it, Omar abolished it as a species of legal prostitution, that was inconsistent with good morals. The Turks, therefore, and other Soonees who respect the decrees of this caliph, hold this practice in abhorrence. The parties agree to live together for a fixed period, which varies from a few days to ninety-nine years. The sum agreed upon as the lady's hire is mentioned in the contract given to her, which is made out by the cauzee, or a moollah, and regularly witnessed. The man may dissolve the contract when he chooses; but the female has a right, from the hour the deed is signed, to the whole amount of the sum that was agreed to be paid her. If the parties are willing, the deed is renewed at the period it expires. This contract conveys no rights to the female beyond the sum specified as her hire. She is, under no circumstances, deemed entitled to share in the inheritance of the property of the person to whom she is contracted. This species of engagement usually takes place between persons of very unequal

CHAP. XXV.

condition in life. The woman is generally of a very inferior family; and her condition can only be termed a state of legal concubinage *.

Forms of divorce.

A man in Persia can divorce his wife at pleasure: but there is an expense and scandal attending such a proceeding, which renders it very unfrequent. It may, indeed, be said never to occur but among the lower classes: for a man of rank would consider himself disgraced by taking a step which would expose a woman, who had been his wife, to be seen by others. The forms of divorce among the Sheahs differ in some trifling points from those observed by the Soonees. Divorces are never on account of adultery, as that crime, if proved, subjects a woman who has been legally married to capital punishment. The general causes are complaints of badness of temper, or extravagance, on the part of the husbands; and of neglect, or cruel usage, on that of their wives. If the husband sues for a divorce, he is compelled to pay his wife's dower; but if she sues for it, her claim to that is cancelled. The consequence is, that it is not unfrequent, among the lower orders, when a man desires to be rid of his partner, to use her so ill, that she is forced to institute a suit for separation; and that, if granted, abrogates all her claims upon her busband.

Animosity between the Hyderee and Neâmuttee wards.

Some peculiar usages of the different cities in Persia have been noticed, particularly the right of insurrection, claimed by the inha-

* The law provides for the manner in which children are to be supported who are born in this state of legal concubinage: and to prevent abuses, a woman is prohibited, after she has parted from the person to whom she was contracted, forming a new engagement till a period has elapsed sufficient to prevent the risk of a man being burdened with spurious offspring.

bitants of Kazveen, when compelled to have recourse to it by oppression *. The division of the chief cities into wards, with the names of Hyderee and Neâmuttee, which one author † has ascribed to the policy of Shah Abbas the Great, still exists, and continues to excite equal animosity to what it did at former periods. There is at all times a jealousy between these parties; but during the three last days of the Mohurrum they attack each other with violence. The object for which they contend appears to be merely the honour of triumph. If a mosque is decorated by one party, the other, if they can, drive them from it, and destroy the flags or ornaments which have been put up. If they force their opponents from their houses, they do not enter or plunder them, but make a mark on each door with a hatchet, in token of victory. These frays are often very serious, and many lives are lost ‡; but no effort is made to abolish an usage which divides those whose union might make them formidable to government.

* The Lootee Bazar, or "right of popular insurrection," which this city claims, has been before noticed. Vide Vol. II. page 6.

† Hanway, Vol. II. p. 104.—Hanway terms these opposite parties Peleuk and Feleuk, names now unknown. Langlēs, in a note in his edition of Chardin, Vol. II. p. 321, concludes that these opposite sects derive their name from Shaik Hyder, the ancestor of the Suffavean family, and from Neâmutullah, the name assumed by the adherents of the dynasty of the White Sheep, which was destroyed by the sect of Hyderee, or adherents of Ismail Sooffee.

‡ I find it stated in a Persian MS., which gives a particular account of several of these frays, that a species of account current is kept of the men of the different parties killed. The ward whose inhabitants have slain the greatest number, are fined the price of blood for the balance, whatever number it may be; and the sum collected is divided among the widows and children of the deceased.

CHAP. XXV.

Modern dress of the Persians

The dress of the citizens of Persia has been often described, both by ancient and modern travellers. That of the men has changed very materially within the last century. The turban, as a head-dress, is now worn by none but the Arabian inhabitants of that country. The Persians wear a long cap covered with lambs' wool, the appearance of which is sometimes improved by being encircled with a Cashmere shawl*. The inhabitants of the principal towns are fond of dressing richly. Their upper garments are either made of chintz, silk, or cloth, and are often trimmed with gold or silver lace: they also wear brocade: and in winter their clothes are lined with furs, of which they import a great variety. It is not customary for any person, except the king, to wear jewels: but nothing can exceed the profusion which he displays of these ornaments; and his subjects seem peculiarly proud of this part of royal magnificence. They assert, that when the monarch is dressed in his most splendid robes, and is seated in the sun, that the eye cannot gaze on the dazzling brilliancy of his attire †.

Condition and treatment of slaves.

The condition of slaves in Persia has been before mentioned: they are not numerous, and cannot be distinguished by any peculiar habits or usages from the other classes, further than that they are generally more trusted and more favoured by their superiors. The

* This custom was very general; but a late mandate has prohibited shawls being worn round the head, except by persons who have a special privilege from the king to do so. This order was given with a view to encourage the Persian manufactories, and to lessen the importation of Cashmere shawls.

† There is, perhaps, no monarch in the universe who possesses jewels of equal value with those belonging to the King of Persia. The finest of these jewels were plundered by Nâdir Shah from the monarchs of Delhi.

name of slave, in this country, may be said to imply confidence on one part and attachment on the other. They are mostly Georgians or Africans; and being obtained or purchased when young, they are usually brought up in the Mahomedan religion. Their master, who takes the merit of their conversion, appropriates the females to his own haram, or to the service of his wives: and when the males are at a proper age, he marries them to a female slave in the family, or to a free woman. Their children are brought up in the house, and have, as has been before noticed, a rank only below relations. In almost every family of consequence, the person in whom the greatest trust is reposed is a house-born slave; and instances of their betraying their charge, or abusing the confidence that is placed in them, are very rare.

Manners and usages among the wandering tribes.

The general observations which have been made on the manners and customs of the Persians, apply peculiarly to the inhabitants of cities, towns, and villages. Many of those of the wandering tribes are different, and merit a distinct notice. The chiefs of these tribes, during peace, usually reside at court, or at provincial capitals; and leave their followers, whom they occasionally visit, to the direction of the elders of the different branches and families of the tribe. The number which remains in one body is regulated by their means of subsistence. They, in general, change their residence with the season, and may be said, throughout the year, to enjoy a fine climate. They pitch their dark tents on the finest of those plains over which they have a right of pasture; and the encampment is usually on the banks of a rivulet, or a stream. It is commonly formed in a square; and the abode of the principal elder is only to be distinguished from that of the lowest man in the tribe by its size. All are made of the same coarse

CHAP. XXV.

materials, and in the same shape. The horses, mules, and sheep, are turned loose, to feed around the encampment. While the young men, if not employed in hunting, are generally seen sitting in circles, smoking, or indulging in repose, the women are busily occupied with their domestic duties, or aiding aged men and boys in tending the flocks. It is the usage of these tribes, unless when very strong, to pitch their tents in the vicinity of a range of mountains, that their flocks and families may be within reach of a place of security on the occurrence of danger. Along the base of those hills which divide Kurdistan from Aderbijan and Irak, every valley is occupied, during the spring and summer, by the camps of these wanderers *.

Their inattention to religion.

The men of some of the rudest of the tribes of Persia are accused by the other natives of that country of paying hardly any attention to the forms of religion, or to its prescriptions, relative to forbidden food; and there is no doubt that the accusation is in some degree just. They openly eat the flesh of the hare †, which is classed

* Small encampments of gipsies are frequently met with in Persia, particularly in Aderbijan. The habits and occupations of the families which we saw in that country appeared very similar to those of the vagrant tribes who wander over England. The Persians call them Kârâchee; a Turkish term, which may be translated "the black "people;" and which, probably, has been given to them from their complexion being darker than that of the natives.

† On my return from Teheran, in A. D. 1800, I one day run a hare near the encampment of some Affshâr families: a number of young men sprung upon their horses, and joined in the chase. One, who was well mounted, and had a fine dog, rode very hard over some rocky ground, and his dog caught the hare, which he immediately tied to his saddle. I asked him, why he did so? "You cannot eat the hare," I said, "as you know it is *mukrooh*, or 'abominable.'"—"Do you think," he replied, "that "I would have hazarded my life, and half killed my horse and my dog, to be deterred,

W. Sandt delt.

C. Heath sculpt.

VIEW OF THE ENCAMPMENT OF A WANDERING TRIBE NEAR THE MOUNTAINS OF KURDISTAN.

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by Mahomedan divines among meats which, though not legally prohibited, are deemed abominable; and there is reason to believe, that many of them are not deterred by the Koran from feasting, when they have an opportunity, upon swine's flesh. A Kurd of some respectability, when speaking in private to an English gentleman, observed, that he thought the tribe to which he belonged resembled Europeans more than Mahomedans. He was asked, in what manner? "Why," said he, "we eat of hog's flesh, keep no "fasts, and say no prayers *." He had seen, among the few Europeans whom he had met with, no acts of public worship, and he was unacquainted with that maxim of their faith, which teaches them not to pray in the streets, "that they may be seen of men †."

Though the chiefs of the principal tribes, from being brought up at court, or at the capital of a province, are often as well educated and as polished in their manners as any of the higher classes of the other natives of Persia; and though some of their followers, who accompany them amid scenes comparatively civilized, cannot be distinguished from the inhabitants of the cities, whose manners they adopt, and among whom they frequently intermarry and settle; the bulk of the tribe, who remain always in tents, or in their rude villages, continue in a state of the most barbarous ignorance. They circumcise their children when at the proper age, and contract marriages according to the prescribed customs: but they are said, and probably

"after all, by what some fool of a moollah has said, from eating this hare? I would "eat his father," he added, laughing; and rode off, delighted with his prize.

* I received this characteristic anecdote from Mr. Jukes, to whom the Kurd (who was the commander of a party of his own tribe, that attended the mission as a guard at Kermanshah,) addressed himself.

† St. Matthew, chap. vi. verse 5.

CHAP. XXV. with truth, to be very neglectful of the other practices of the Mahomedan religion. Though some of them, who desire a character for superior piety, go through the regular ablutions, and the forms of prayer, they are, in general, entirely ignorant of the words which they ought to repeat. A Persian writer, who has related some curious facts on the manners of this class, states *, that, when a young man, he was saying his prayers at the appointed time, before a person of the tribe of Shah Sevund †. Observing that this man did not do the same, he asked him, if he never addressed the Almighty according to the forms prescribed by the holy prophet? "I now and then bend my head, and raise it again," was the reply, "as I have just now seen you do; but I repeat no prayers; and never, "indeed, learnt any." The same writer informs us ‡, that a citizen, who was the guest of a man of one of these tribes, to whom he had been useful in disposing of his sheep, when he began one morning, according to his usual practice, to read aloud a chapter of the Koran, was assailed with a stick by his female hostess, who asked him, in a rage, if he conceived that one of the family was dead, that he thought it necessary to read that book. The husband, though he reproved the violence of his wife, told his friend, that he should have known better than to anticipate misfortune, by going through a ceremony only used at funerals. This rude race seldom receive any religious instruction. If a priest of a neighbouring village visits their tents, and summons them to prayers, they listen to him with impatience; and, if any accident happens to their flocks while they are attending

* Persian MS.

† This tribe has been before mentioned: (vide Vol. I. page 556). They are still numerous.

‡ Persian MS.

divine worship, they load him with abuse, and reproach him with being the sole cause of the misfortune *.

Their boast of being plunderers.

The wandering tribes of Persia are all plunderers; and they glory in admitting that they are so. They are continually recounting their own successful acts of depredation, or those of their ancestors: and from the chief to the lowest man in the tribe, they boast openly of deeds for which men would be capitally punished in a better ordered government. Every sentiment that escapes them evinces their attachment to their predatory habits. They often regret the internal tranquillity of their country; and speak, with rapture, of those periods of confusion, when every man who, to use their own expression, "had a horse, a sword, and a heart, could "live in comfort and happiness." I happened, when on the march towards the royal camp at Sultaneah, to ask a chief of one of these tribes, what ruins those were on the right of the road? His eyes glistened at the question. "It is more than twenty years," he said, "since I accompanied my uncle in a night attack to plunder and "destroy that village, and it has never been rebuilt. Its inhabitants, "who are a bad race, and our enemies, have, however, settled near "it, and are again become rich. I trust in God," he added with emphasis, "that the present tranquillity will not last: and if old times "return, I will have another blow at these gentlemen before I die." A still more remarkable instance of this feeling occurred on my first mission to Persia. When hunting one day near the line of march, we came to a deep ravine: and as we were crossing it, an old Persian of

* This was stated to me by a moollah, who was in the constant habit of visiting these tribes.

the tribe of Lac, who was then in my service, turned round, and said to me with a smile: "In this ravine, sir, about twenty years ago, I, and "ten others of my own tribe, lay in wait for a caravan. We attacked "them, and killed five or six useless fellows of merchants and mule "drivers: the rest run away, and we found plenty of plunder. I "lived gloriously," he continued, "for some years on the produce of "the shawls that fell to my share: but all my cash is gone, and I am "now a poor old fellow. Yet, after all," he added, "it is some consolation to think that a man has had a share of the good things of "this world." This race are, as may be concluded from the above anecdotes, strangers to the causes which promote civilisation and improvement, and insensible to the blessing of that security and good order which give prosperity to nations. They view every thing through the medium to which they have been accustomed: and power appears only to possess charms in proportion as it ministers to their passions. But this observation may perhaps be applied with equal justice to their superiors. The reigning Monarch of Persia, when I endeavoured to explain to him the nature and operation of the various checks which constituted the excellence of the British government, exclaimed, after listening with great attention, "Your king then appears to be no more than the first "magistrate of the state! So limited an authority may have permanence, but can have no enjoyment! My power," he added, "is very different: it is real enjoyment! I can either elevate or "degrade all these high nobles and officers whom you see around "me at pleasure: but then, it is true, there is no security for "my family possessing the throne I occupy. Right, in Persia, "always has and always will belong to the sword." It is not

surprising that the military populace of a country, where the monarch professes these sentiments, should measure their title to consideration, and their power of attaining enjoyments, by their means of pillaging or oppressing others. If a prince, or chief of high rank, evince a contrary disposition, his conduct excites, among this class, very opposite feelings to those of admiration. A man of one of these tribes, who was sent to accompany two English gentlemen * through a part of Persia, contended with his companions, that a prince of the blood royal whom he served had better claims to the crown, because he was more dreaded than one of his royal brothers whom they had extolled for his humanity, virtue, and intelligence. " You see," he observed to them as they were riding along, " that small village before us. If the prince you praise were " where we are, the inhabitants would be at this moment running to " meet him, and be eager to pitch his tents: whereas, if my master " were here, so great is the terror of his name, that they would " already have fled to the summit of the neighbouring hills. Now, I " ask you," he added, exultingly, " which is the most proper of these " two to govern such a kingdom as Persia?" The same person, who was rather an intelligent man of his class, was very inquisitive to learn from his fellow travellers the condition of England: and, after listening with delight to their accounts of the richness of its fields, the beauty of its towns, and the great wealth of its inhabitants, he exclaimed, " What a number of plunderers you must have there †!"

* This occurred in A. D. 1810. Mr. Ellis and Captain Macdonald were the gentlemen alluded to. They were travelling from Sennah in Kurdistan to Hamadan in Irak.

† When I returned from Persia in 1801, I brought with me a man of some rank belonging to a tribe in Khorassan, who desired to visit India. I was anxious that he

CHAP. XXV.

On being informed that the laws restrained men from plundering, he asked, with apparent astonishment, "What then can be the "occupation of so numerous a population?" Those who had given the description which led to these remarks, were at once amused and surprised at so extraordinary a proof of that strong bias which the human mind receives from its feelings and thoughts being all directed in one course.

Their abhorrence of the name of thieves.

Though the highest of the military tribes of Persia are proud of being called plunderers, they hold in abhorrence the name of thieves. The cause of this distinction is obvious. The difference between force and fraud, implies that between strength and weakness. There are, however, some of the lesser clans whose occupation is avowedly theft; but even these pretend to honour. When the British mission passed through Kurdistan, the camp was one day pitched in the vicinity of the huts of some families of the tribe of Ghishkee. The women were employed in baking, spinning, and weaving carpets; while the men were, as usual, wandering idle, or in search of game. The English gentlemen, who had been told that this tribe were remarkable for being the greatest thieves in Persia, and that the children were beat daily by their mothers to accustom them to pain, that when they were caught stealing they might not be alarmed, by blows, into a confession of their accomplices, asked an old man if these accusations were true. "We are abused," he said, "more "than we deserve; for, after all, our theft is only a species of war. "We never either rob or steal, except from those with whom our

should see and admire Calcutta, and sent a person to show him every part of that city. When he returned, I asked him what he thought of the capital of British India? "Ajub jaêê buraee chapou ast!" was his reply. "It is a noble place to plunder!"

e del[t].

C. Heath direxit

SKETCH OF SOME FAMILIES OF THE GHISHKEE TRIBE IN THEIR SUMMER HUTS.

Published March 1st 1815, by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

"ruler, the Waly of Sennah, is upon bad terms. When Persia is in "confusion," he added, "then is our harvest: but now these Kujurs," meaning the reigning family, "have every thing their own "way, and we are likely to be ruined."—On hearing some suspicion expressed as to the truth of his statement, the old man observed, with animation, "that his tribe had been appointed to guard the "English camp, and that we should have an opportunity of judging "of their honesty, when trust was reposed in them, by the manner "in which they performed that duty." He had a right to boast that they were faithful guards, for not an article was lost during the period they attended the mission.

Their hospitality and attention to strangers.

The inhabitants of Persia have always been famed for their great hospitality to strangers; but the chiefs of the warlike tribes of that country are, beyond all others, remarkable for the manner in which they perform this courteous duty. The conduct of the Khan of the tribe of Karagoozoloo to the British mission which some years ago visited his government at Hamadan*, may be adduced as a proof of this fact. He had prepared, for their accommodation, his own house in the town, and removed to a country-seat, which was at some distance. To this residence he one day invited the whole party; and, at his particular desire, every person, from the highest to the lowest, went. The train of the English envoy was increased by that of a Persian ambassador and his suite, who were proceeding to India. The cavalcade reached the khan's abode at an early hour,

* I left Teheran in January, 1801, and arrived at Hamadan, on my way to Bagdad, on the eleventh of February. The cold was, at this period, excessive, and the whole country was covered with snow, about four feet deep. The name of the Governor of Hamadan was Mahomed Hussun Khan Karagoozoloo.

CHAP. XXV. and staid till near midnight. Nothing could exceed the magnificence of their entertainment. They were not, however, aware, till they had taken their leave, of the extent of the attention with which they had been treated. When they mounted to return home, they were informed, that during the time they had been at dinner a sudden and severe frost having come on, every horse and mule belonging to the party, amounting to nearly two hundred, had been rough shod, to prevent any accident occurring to the guests of the khan. All were alike struck with admiration at this remarkable proof of the kind and munificent hospitality of their noble host.

Boast that their word is inviolable.

The tribes of Persia, as well as those of Arabia, boast, that when once they pledge themselves to give protection, their word is inviolable: but the faithless barbarity of a chief* of the tribe of Fylee has injured, if not destroyed, the claim, which even the worst of these plunderers had before established, to the confidence of the defenceless stranger. This villain invited two English officers †, who were travelling near his camp, to be his guests, and he became their murderer. His crime appeared to excite, at the moment, a very general feeling of indignation; but, to the reproach of the government, and of his countrymen, he has hitherto escaped punishment, and continues to commit depredations amid the mountains that separate the Persian province of Khuzistan from the territories of the Turkish ruler of the Pachalic of Bagdad.

* Kulb Aly Khan.

† Captain Grant and Lieutenant Fotheringham. The indignation which all felt at the conduct of this chief, was greatly increased by the high character of those who became the victims of his treacherous barbarity.

Their attachment to the families of their chiefs.

The attachment of the tribes of Persia to the families of their chiefs has been noticed. They will seldom consent to obey any other person: and instances often occur, where an infant is carried into the field, in order that the services of those who consider him as their only lawful leader may be obtained. If a general levy of the tribe be required for the service of the sovereign, it is effected with difficulty and delay: but a call, connected with their own safety, or that of their chieftain, is promptly obeyed. On such occasions, the signal to assemble flies, to use their own phrase, "from tent to tent, from "hill to hill." We are struck at meeting, among these rude families, so many usages with which we are familiar; and the interest we take in inquiring into their customs is increased by the recollection that they were those of our forefathers.

Their commerce.

The wandering tribes of Persia maintain a constant intercourse with the principal cities and towns of that country. They generally carry on a petty commerce in horses and sheep, which they breed; and in carpets, which are wove by their females. In return for these, they receive grain, cloth, money, and articles of hardware. The unwarlike part of the population of Persia are termed Taujeck, which word has been before explained *. It means a person of civil occupation. But this class are not confined to cities. They are often attached to the wandering tribes, by whom they are employed to cultivate their fields, and to tend their flocks. The tribes of Persia have not, however, at present, many subjects of this description. They decrease as the government advances in vigour, and can release them from a dependance upon

* Vide Vol. I. p. 125.

CHAP. XXV. their rude masters. It is remarkable, that all the Taujecks in Affghanistan, and part of Tartary, speak the Persian language: and this fact, while it aids us in fixing the ancient limits of that empire, appears to support a conjecture before made *, that though these countries have been overrun, at different periods, by martial tribes, those races of their inhabitants who pursued the occupations of civil life, have remained unchanged, amid the revolutions to which the countries they inhabit have been exposed.

The ceremonies practised by the wandering tribes, on the circumcision of their male children, on giving a name to a child, or in the burial of the dead, are substantially the same as those of the citizens of Persia, and of all other Mahomedans; but they continue to preserve, at the funerals of chiefs and soldiers of high reputation, the usages of their more remote ancestors. The charger of the departed warrior, carrying his arms and clothes †, accompanies the procession; and it is not unusual for those who desire to show their respect for the deceased, to send a horse without a rider, but with arms upon his saddle, to swell the train of the mourning cavalcade ‡. Every trace of these rude rites is interesting, as it marks the origin of customs that are still observed by the most civilized nations.

Ceremonies observed at their marriages.

The principal ceremonies of marriage among the tribes in Persia are the same as those observed by the inhabitants of the cities and

* Vide Vol. I. p. 125.

† His clothes and arms are put upon his favourite horse; the cap he wore is placed on the pique of his saddle; the cloth with which he girded his loins is bound round the horse's neck, while the boots are laid across the saddle.

‡ I find from the MS. of Meer Yusoof-u-deen, that the same usages prevail in Tartary.

towns of that kingdom. Like them they settle a dower upon their wives. The ring is sent in all due form, and presents are interchanged between the families. They also observe the usage of staining the hands with a red dye * the day before that of the marriage; and, like the citizens, they dissipate their property on their nuptial feasts. These feasts, among men of rank or wealth, are protracted to thirty or forty days; and with the poorest person they continue three. That period is indeed requisite for the observance of the established forms. On the first day the company are assembled; the second is appropriated to the important ceremony of staining the hands; and the third to that of the marriage. Among all ranks in Persia the bridegroom appears, on his wedding-day, dressed in all the finery he can obtain; and on that day he receives from his relations and friends the same obsequious attention which is paid by inferiors to a superior of elevated rank. All who come into his presence sit below him †; offerings are brought to the bridegroom from his relations; and these are received with great ceremony by some of his friends, who act on that day as his servants. Two persons, generally near relations, are appointed to carry his orders into execution: these are termed his right-hand man and left-hand man ‡: and if the bridegroom is a child, or bashful, these men act for him, and increase the mirth of the wedding by a thousand tricks which they play on his relations and friends. They pretend to receive the bridegroom's

* This dye is called hennah.

† If the governor of a province were to attend the marriage ceremony of his servant, he would, on that occasion, sit below him. — *Persian MS.*

‡ The bridegroom's right-hand man is, in Turkish, called *sâkdesh*; and his left-hand man *soldesh*.

CHAP. XXV. commands as those of a monarch, to seize one person, to fine another, and to flog a third. These marriage pranks are usually preconcerted: but even when not, they never give offence, as instances of bad humour at a nuptial festival are of very rare occurrence. The joys in the house of the bride are more moderate: the lady is bathed, perfumed, and dressed in the richest clothes her family can afford. She also sits in state; and, before she leaves her own house, or tent, she receives presents from a number of her friends. When this ceremony is over, she is covered with a scarlet veil, is mounted upon horseback, and conveyed to her husband's dwelling, who receives her at the threshold. The above usages are now almost as common among the citizens as among the wandering tribes of Persia. It remains to speak of those customs which are more peculiar to the latter; and several of which, from their character, probably existed among this class long before the introduction of the Mahomedan religion.

On the morning that the bride is to be conveyed to the house or tent of the bridegroom her friends assemble. If she is the daughter of a chief, or of an elder of a tribe, she is accompanied by all the horsemen whose attendance he can command: the party proceed, accompanied by dancers and music; and, if the place of their destination is near, they take a circuitous road to it, that the enjoyment of this part of the ceremony may be prolonged. When they appear at a distance the bridegroom mounts his horse, and, attended by his friends, proceeds to meet the cavalcade. He holds an apple or an orange* in his hand, and, when sufficiently near to be certain of his

* This usage, of throwing the apple or orange, is also common among citizens, who throw it at their brides from the threshold or balcony of the house.

aim, he throws it at her with considerable force *. All is silent attention from the time the parties come near each other till this act, which is the signal for general uproar and confusion. The bridegroom wheels his horse round, and rides at full speed to his place of abode. Every horseman of the bride's party endeavours to seize him; and he that succeeds, has his horse, saddle, and clothes, as a reward. This, however, is only the case where the party is wealthy: among the poorer classes a few pieces of silver are paid as a fine to the successful pursuer. The bridegroom, however, is not often taken; for, as it is a point of honour to escape, he rides the fleetest horse of his tribe, and his friends endeavour by every means to favour his retreat.

When the bride arrives at her future residence, the women by whom she is attended entreat her not to alight. The husband's relations crowd around her, and beg that she will. This is the moment of her power: every male of the family into which she is about to enter brings her presents proportionate to their ability, or their feelings of regard to her husband. They also solicit her to give up part of her dower, and their instances are afterwards repeated by the husband: but the women of Persia are naturally tenacious of the only security they have against bad usage or accident; and, though they sometimes return a part, they usually reserve enough to render it a check upon those to whom they intrust their future comfort and happiness. At these marriages the men and women of the tribe dance †: and the most polished chiefs, though they may conform, in

* He is encouraged to throw the apple away with all the force he can, as it is deemed fortunate to do so.

† They stand in a line or ring and join hands, while the music plays, and a person sings in just cadence with it. The whole party join in a rude chorus.

CHAP. XXV. the marriages of their own family, with the usages of the inhabitants of the cities in which they live, are in the habit of visiting the tents of their followers on these joyous occasions; and of contributing, by their munificence, and their example of unreserved hilarity, to the mirth of these wedding feasts.

Usage of divorce among the wandering tribes.

The usage of divorce among the tribes is the same as among the inhabitants of cities, but it is of still rarer occurrence. This may be ascribed to various causes. The virtue of the females is more strict: they are, from their labour, more valuable to their husbands: and the poorer class have seldom the means of paying a dower to a wife whom they divorce. We may also conclude, that it is dangerous, in such a community, to offend the relations of a female of a respectable family: for, though these are prompt to be her executioners if she is proved guilty of adultery, they are her strenuous supporters as long as she is innocent of that crime. We are told by an intelligent Persian*, who has written a short treatise upon the manners of these tribes, that the deepest pledge which they can give of their resolution to conquer or perish in any enterprise in which they are engaged, is to go through the ceremony of a conditional divorce of their wives. They pronounce them divorced unless success crowns their efforts. " In former days," he observes, " a man would have been deemed despicable who outlived defeat " after this ceremony: but it is now," he adds, " too often an empty " boast; and men are not ashamed to fly the moment after they " have uttered a vow which their ancestors deemed the most sacred " that a man of honour could make."

* Persian MS.

The time of the male part of the tribes in Persia is passed in riding, practising their military exercises, and hunting. Their fare is coarse and moderate: they now and then feast upon meat; but their general diet is a hard black bread, sour milk, and curds. They do not often indulge in intoxicating liquors: their chief delight is in sitting together, smoking their pipes, and in listening to songs and tales, or in looking at the tricks, grimaces, and witticisms, of buffoons*, (who are to be found in every quarter of Persia;) and some of whom are perfectly skilled in their art. A Persian chief† of a Kurdish tribe who remained several days with the British mission when it was in the vicinity of Kermanshah, had in his train a jester, who possessed very versatile and extraordinary talents. One day upon the march, this fellow, addressing the English envoy, said, " You are, no doubt, very proud of the " discipline you have established among your Persian servants, who " march in your front in as regular a style as your own soldiers. " How long, sir," said the wit, " has it taken you to introduce this " order among my countrymen?"—" About six months," was the reply.—" Now," said he, " if you will permit me, you shall see

* The Persians say, that a good Loottee, or " buffoon," ought to be able to laugh, cry, weep, sit still, and dance, at the same moment. Some of these jesters approach very near this idea of perfection.

† This occurred in 1801. The name of this chief was Mehdy Khan Kulhoor: he is chief of a tribe who can mount four thousand horse. This nobleman possessed more accomplishments than any I met with in Persia. He was not only a scholar, but a poet and a painter; and he added to his other qualities the reputation of being a good soldier.

CHAP. XXV. "that I will, in less than six minutes, destroy all that you have done "in six months." On leave being granted, he immediately rode near the Persian horsemen, who were leading the state-horses, and who had strict orders not to leave their ranks. He had noticed that these men were almost all of the Lac and Fylee tribes, whose chief residence is among the mountains of Louristan: and he began to sing, as if to himself, but in a clear and loud voice, a song, which commenced, "Attend to me ye sons of Louristan, I sing of the "glorious deeds of your forefathers." Before he had finished his song, to which all were listening with attention, the whole cavalcade was thrown into confusion by the kicking of horses, caused by the Persians having broke the line of march and crowded round to hear him more distinctly. The jester laughed most heartily at the success of his joke; and, addressing the envoy, said: "Do not be distressed "at the fate of your fine discipline, for I have heard of a man who, "with no other means than the song I have just sung, collected an "army, and was called a king* for several weeks."

The men of the wandering tribes delight to tell or listen to romantic tales: some of them not only make themselves masters of this art, but learn to recite verses, particularly those of Ferdosi. A person who has cultivated this talent enjoys a great share of the respect of his associates, who frequently call upon him to amuse an

* This, I am assured, was the fact. A chief of no pretensions had, during the confusion that followed the death of Nâdir Shah, gone about Louristan with some musicians and singers, who continually played and sung this favourite provincial air; and he had actually, by this means alone, collected about five thousand followers, and proclaimed himself king.

idle hour by transporting his hearers into the regions of fancy, or to excite their minds to deeds of valour, by repeating lines which celebrate the renown of their ancestors.

Condition of the females of the wandering tribes.

It has been already stated, that the women of the tribes of Persia who dwell in tents are seldom veiled: their usual occupations have also been described. They are more respected than the females who dwell in cities, because they are more useful to the community of which they form a part. They not only share the bed, but the fatigues and dangers of their husbands: and the masculine habits which they acquire do not displease, for they seem suited to their condition of life. If they are not of high rank, they perform all the domestic and menial offices of their own home: and strangers, who visit their houses and tents, are certain to receive the kindest and most hospitable welcome from them. But there is nothing in the manner of these women that can be mistaken: it is fearless, but not forward; and evidently proceeds from the consciousness of security, not the absence of shame. Though in general their complexion is dark and sun-burnt, they have sometimes, when young, a considerable share of beauty: a sense of their free condition gives lustre to their eyes; and they often add to fine features a very graceful form. But among the lower orders of this class, their beauty is soon destroyed by hard labour, and continual exposure to the climate.

A Persian gentleman*, remarkable for his polished manners and the gayety of his disposition, describes his entertainment by the

* Mahomed Hussein Khan, son of the late Mehdi Aly Khan, who was sent by the Government of Bombay on a mission to the Court of Persia in A. D. 1798.

CHAP. XXV. females of one of these tribes in a very natural and characteristic manner. "When I arrived," he observes, "at the village of "Sennah *, which is inhabited by the Turkish tribes of Khuzâl and "Affshâr, I was invited to take up my abode in the house of one of "the chiefs of the latter, and received, while I staid, the greatest "attention from all his family. The ladies, who, according to "custom, were unveiled, were particularly kind. The daughter of my "host, who was about fifteen years of age, was more beautiful than "I can express. When I said that I was thirsty, she ran and "brought me a cup of pure water. It was a draught from the "fountain of life, brought by an angel: but it increased, instead "of extinguishing the flame which her bright dark eyes had kindled "in my breast †." After describing the pain which it gave him to depart from this dwelling without daring to show, even by a look, the nature of that passion which he entertained for this young beauty, he very sensibly observes:—"A vain and uninformed man "might have mistaken the manner of my fair cup-bearer; but I had "experience of these Eelliaat ladies, and well knew that nothing "was meant but that kindness and hospitality with which they "treat all strangers who visit their tents or houses. I believe," he concludes, "they are virtuous beyond all other women in Persia; "and the man who should even attempt seduction, would be sacri- "ficed to the implacable honour of their male relations ‡." The habits of these females fit them for the scenes to which they are occasionally exposed. When riding near a small encampment of

* This village is in Irak. The name is the same as that of the capital of Ardelan.

† Mahomed Hussein Khan's MS. Journal.

‡ Ibid.

THE TANJORE ... SARASWATI MAHAL

Affshâr families, I expressed my doubts to a Persian noble, who was with me, regarding their reputed boldness and hardihood, and particularly of their skill in horsemanship. He immediately called to a young woman of a handsome appearance, and asked her in Turkish if she was not a soldier's daughter? She said she was. "And you expect to be a mother of soldiers," was the next observation. She smiled. "Mount that horse," said he, pointing to one with a bridle, but without a saddle, "and show this "European envoy the difference between a girl of a tribe, and a "citizen's daughter." She instantly sprung upon the animal, and, setting off at full speed, did not stop till she had reached the summit of a small hill in the vicinity, which was covered with loose stones: when there, she waved her hand over her head, and then came down the hill at the same rate she had ascended. Nothing could be more dangerous than the ground over which she galloped: but she appeared quite fearless, and seemed delighted at having had an opportunity of vindicating the females of her tribe from the reproach of being like the ladies of cities.

The poverty and usages of the wandering tribes often prevent the men from marrying even the number of wives allowed by the law. Many of them have only one; and, unless she is old, barren, or unfit to work, they do not marry another. The reason is, that they can seldom afford to support more than one wife: and, from the liberty which the females enjoy, their quarrels, where there are several in a family, would be seriously embarrassing; and marriage, which is considered as one of the chief bonds of union between the men of a tribe, would become a constant source of discord and contention. The practice of hiring wives for a certain period, which prevails in

CHAP. XXV.

The practice of hiring wives is held in abhorrence among them.

the cities and towns of Persia, is held in abhorrence by the females of tribes; and these have frequently been known to attack priests in the most violent manner, whom they believed to have sanctioned an usage which they deem so degrading. Though we may conclude, from what has been stated, that these women enjoy more freedom and consideration than the other females of Persia, they are still remote from that rank which has been assigned to the sex among the civilized nations of Europe: they toil, while their lord-like husband spends his hours in indolence, or amusement, and are regarded more as servants than as associates. If a man of a wandering tribe has not so many wives and slaves as the religion he professes permits, or as his brother Mahomedan of the city, it is merely, as has been stated, because his poverty, or the condition of the society to which he belongs, limits his desires. The moment that his situation alters he is prompt to riot in every species of dissipation; and the partner, who more than shares his toils, has no chance of an equal partition in any good fortune that may attend him. If he is raised to a high station, he deems an increased indulgence of his sensual appetites one of the chief pleasures of advancement: and when he becomes an inhabitant of a city, he at once adopts the customs of a citizen. His first wives, if he has more than one, are compelled to sacrifice the liberty they before enjoyed, and to endure that neglect which is the natural consequence of his power to obtain younger and more beautiful females. Among these tribes, however, maternal claims are always respected. The mother's influence over her son usually continues through life; and she is ready to maintain that authority, which is grounded on habit and affection, by ministering to his gratification. It is her duty to preside over his family; and, if

Their respect for maternal claims.

he is rich, he usually intrusts to her not only the choice of his female partners, but their management. An anticipation of the enjoyment of this power makes the women in Persia anxiously desire to have male children. The birth of a son is hailed with joy; that of a daughter is always a disappointment. CHAP. XXV.

Condition of the Arabian tribes in Persia.

These observations on the usages of the wandering tribes chiefly apply to those of Persian and Turkish origin. The Arabian tribes subject to Persia, who inhabit the shores of the Gulf, are more assimilated, in their habits, to the people from which they are derived, than to those amid whom they dwell. They continue to speak Arabic, and preserve almost all the customs of their original country. They in general dress like the inhabitants of Arabia, wearing, instead of the cap of the Persians, a light turban, and are usually covered with a flowing cloak. The manners of this race, though less rude than those of the other tribes of Persia, retain much of the wildness and independence of their ancestors.

Their dress.

Diet.

The diet of the Arabian tribes in Persia is more frugal than that of any other of the inhabitants of that kingdom. It consists chiefly of dates. But what others would consider a hardship, habit, with them, has converted into an enjoyment; and the Arab deems no food more delightful than that upon which he lives. Some years ago, a woman, belonging to one of the Arab families settled at Abusheher, had gone to England with the children of the British resident at that place. When she returned, all crowded around her, to hear the report of the country she had visited. She described the roads, the carriages, the horses, the wealth and the splendour of the cities, and the highly cultivated state of the country. Her audience were full of envy at the condition of Englishmen, and were on the point of

CHAP. XXV. retiring with that impression, when the woman happened to add, that the country she had visited only wanted one thing to make it delightful. "What is that?" was the general inquiry. "It has "not a date tree in it," said she. "I never ceased to look for "one, all the time I was there, but I looked in vain." The sentiments of the Arabs who had listened to her, were, in an instant, changed by this information. It was no longer envy, but pity, which they felt for men, who were condemned to live in a country where there were no date trees.

The Arabian tribes in Persia possess the power of flying from oppression when they cannot resist it. The sea is always open to them, and they are accustomed to that element. Not only the islands of the Gulf, but the neighbouring territories of Turkey, and the opposite coast of Arabia, are inhabited by their brethren: and these circumstances, combined with their original habits, give a freedom of sentiment and expression to this race of men that is very striking. When a party of English gentlemen, who were hunting near Abusheher, were preparing to slip an English and an Arabian greyhound at a deer, to see which was fleetest, one of them stated his belief that the English dog would beat. The moment this observation was made, a poor Arab, who had accompanied the party in hopes of obtaining a trifling present for leading a dog, sprung forward, and exclaimed, with all the natural energy of his race, "You are wrong, sir! by Heaven, the Arab dog will win*!"

The manners of some of the mountain tribes who inhabit the great ranges of the southern part of Persia, cannot be described,

* This occurred when I was at Abusheher in 1810.

for they are hardly known: but we may conclude, that their usages are as little changed since the time of Alexander, as their relations to the sovereign of the country; which, from the description given of them by the historians of the Grecian conqueror, appear to have been exactly the same at that period as they are at present. Alexander is represented as having pursued the same policy toward them which the modern Kings of Persia are necessitated to adopt. He endeavoured to make them husbandmen and feeders of cattle, that they might, "when they had property of their own to defend, refrain from encroaching upon their neighbours *."

The rude tribes, who have been described, are not envious of that civilisation of which we are so proud. We may wonder at their ignorance and prejudice; but we must recollect that men are formed by habit, and that all their sufferings and enjoyments are comparative. How often do we see them rejoicing under hardships and bondage, and repining at their lot when courted by liberty and fortune! The feelings we receive from living in one state of society, disqualify us from judging of those of another: but he who has travelled over the greatest space will be most struck with the equal dispensation of happiness and misery; and his value for knowledge will not be decreased by observing, that those are not always the most happy who possess it. It is proper and just that we should be grateful for the blessing of civilisation; but we should not assume too great a superiority over those who continue in a more barbarous state. A study of their manners, of the causes of their misery, and the sources of their happiness,

* Translation of Arian, Vol. II. page 280.

CHAP. XXV. may teach us many useful and important lessons. Human nature is always the same, in whatever garb it is clothed: and there can be none to whom it is of more consequence to contemplate society in its rudest state, than a nation who continues, amid scenes of luxury and refinement, to cherish an individual independence, and a political freedom, that are grounded upon the institutions of a race of brave, but turbulent warriors; and which cannot be maintained but by the constant recollection of those rights which belong to him, who is ready to suffer every privation, rather than become a slave.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Reflections on the actual Condition of Persia, and the Character of its Inhabitants.

THOUGH no country has undergone, during the last twenty centuries, more revolutions than the kingdom of Persia, there is, perhaps, none that is less altered in its condition. The power of the sovereigns, and of the satraps of ancient times; the gorgeous magnificence of the court; the habits of the people; their division into citizens, martial tribes, and savage mountaineers; the internal administration; and mode of warfare; have continued essentially the same: and the Persians, as far as we have the means of judging, are, at the present period, not a very different people from what they were in the time of Darius, and of Nousheerwan.

There is no example, during more than twelve centuries, of any Mahomedan nation having attained a high rank in the scale of civilisation. The inhabitants of all those countries who have adopted this religion, have invariably been exposed to the miseries of an arbitrary and unsettled rule. Many reasons have been urged to account for this remarkable and striking fact; among which the most prominent are the example of the prophet of Arabia, and the character of some of the fundamental tenets of his faith. The life of Mahomed, after he declared his mission, was passed

CHAP. XXVI in constant warfare; and he is scarcely more revered by his followers on account of his sanctity as "the deputed of God*," than for his personal courage, and his skill as a military commander. Every Mahomedan ruler has, consequently, been able to plead, as a lawful excuse for his ambition, the desire of emulating the earthly glory of his prophet: and the precepts of the Koran†, have continually been quoted to show, in their application to the friends and enemies of the faith, the necessity of obedience, and the virtue of violence.

The institution of polygamy, and the degrading usage of secluding the female sex, which Mahomed practised and recommended, have, no doubt, had an influence, scarcely secondary to any other cause, in retarding the progress of civilisation among those races who have adopted his faith. The mind is formed by its domestic habits: and in a Mahomedan community, every man is a despot in his own house. From childhood to old age he hears of, and sees nothing but, arbitrary power. Accustomed only to obey or to command, he cannot understand what is meant by individual or political freedom: and he recognises in the monarch of the country the same absolute

* Russool-ullâh, or "the deputed of God," is the most common title of Mahomed.

† The Koran, which was written by a martial leader during his contest for power, being recognised as the source of the only written law of Mahomedan nations, may be supposed to tend, in no slight degree, to keep these in a state of comparative barbarism. Commentaries may be written to explain the text in a manner the most suited to those to whom the law applies; but the principle on which it is founded can neither be changed nor set aside: reason is fettered by faith; and men are condemned to receive their laws as articles of belief, in which it is impiety to exercise their reason.

power which he claims to exercise over all whom nature or fortune have placed under his own authority. CHAP.XXVI

Other causes might, no doubt, be discovered in the ancient and present condition of the great kingdoms of Asia, which may, in some degree, account for their never having attained a state of improvement which can be compared with that enjoyed by almost all those nations who form the present commonwealth of Europe: but the reasons that have been stated, will fully explain that complete apathy on all points connected with the shape of the government under which they live, which is a characteristic feature of the population of every country inhabited by Mahomedans. Chiefs of tribes have combined to preserve their independence. Their followers have, from their love of natural liberty, clung to the habits of savage life rather than become the defenceless objects of oppression: but there has never been, among those who professed this religion, one effort made for rational freedom, nor a desire shown to impose any salutary and permanent check upon the absolute authority of their sovereign. If his cruelty occasions revolt, the only use which they make of success is to place themselves at the mercy of another tyrant; and his first exercise of that power which they bestow upon him, is to subdue the spirit of turbulence to which he has owed his elevation.

The History of Persia, from the Arabian conquest to the present day, may be adduced as a proof of the truth of these observations: and while the causes, by which the effects have been produced, continue to operate, no material change in the condition of that empire can be expected. Its prosperity will continue to depend upon the personal character of its monarchs: and the best of kings cannot do

CHAP. XXVI more than promote that during the uncertain period of his own life. The consequences which the recent approximation of a great European power* may have upon the future destiny of this kingdom, cannot easily be foretold: but the natives of Turkey, wrapt up in the habits of their ancestors, and defended by their religious prejudices, have for ages resisted the progress of that civilisation with which they are surrounded: and if we were to draw an inference from this example, we should conclude, that vicinity of territory, and consequent collision of opposite habits and faith, was more likely to increase than to diminish those obstacles which have hitherto prevented any very intimate or social intercourse between Mahomedan and Christian nations.

Before we conclude a work in which an effort has been made to convey to the English reader fuller information than he has hitherto possessed of the past history and present condition of Persia, it appears desirable to offer some reflections on the general character of the different classes of its inhabitants.

General character and condition of the sovereigns of Persia.

The personal characters of the Kings of Persia have been given in the course of this history: what remains to be said relates more to those qualities which appear to be connected with their condition, than to their personal disposition or talents. Almost all the sovereigns of this country have been religious, or were at least punctual observers of the forms of the faith which they professed. This is essential (even if they were not sincere,) to the support of their power; and its necessity is inculcated from infancy. Lessons of morality are not thought to be so important. Every Monarch of Persia is considered at liberty to indulge, from his earliest youth,

* Russia.

in the grossest sensuality. The boundless gratification of his passions is deemed a privilege of his condition: and we may, perhaps, trace to this, beyond all other causes, that constant change of dynasties which we meet with in the history of this country. Families are elevated to power by the efforts of some great and extraordinary man: his immediate successors, stimulated by his example, and by the necessity of exertion, to maintain and extend the dominion that his courage and talents have acquired, pursue the same path: but their descendants are destroyed by the fame of their forefathers. Instructed to believe themselves born to rule, they conceive that they have only to enjoy the power which they inherit. They give themselves up to the luxury by which they are courted; listen to the flatterers by whom they are surrounded: till, enervated and subdued by a life of indolence and vice, they fall before a popular chief of their own country, or a foreign enemy.

A Monarch of Persia acknowledges nothing as obligatory upon him but the ritual observances of his religion. Mercy, generosity, and justice, he admits to be virtues; but considers them as royal qualities, not duties. Accustomed to have every look obeyed, and to complete submission to his authority, he is as impatient of any obstacle to the fulfilment of his desires, as he is insensible to the value of devoted service. We discover, from their history, that the Kings of Persia have, with some remarkable exceptions, almost always chosen their personal companions from among men of low birth and mean attainments. Those who exercise absolute power, and whose only title to be called great is derived from the splendour of the station which they occupy, hate to be approached in their unreserved moments by men who have high pretensions, either

CHAP. XXVI from hereditary rank, or superior talents and virtue. They feel happier and more at ease when surrounded by a circle of an opposite description: and the pride of despotism is, perhaps, never so much gratified as when it can look around and see nothing but what rests entirely on its favour, and which consequently can be destroyed with the same breath by which it was created.

There is, perhaps, nothing more difficult than for a Monarch of Persia to continue humane, even if that should be his natural disposition. The constant habit of directing and witnessing executions must, in the course of time, harden his nature: and those intrusted with the education of the princes of this country, as if apprehensive that an indulgence in tender feelings should interfere with the performance of their future duties, take them, when almost infants, to witness scenes at which men would shudder. These early lessons appear to have been almost uniformly successful; for we have hardly one instance, in the history of Persia, of a king of that country evincing any uncommon degree of humanity: while there are many to prove, that the habit of shedding blood often becomes a passion; by a brutal indulgence in which, human beings appear to lose that rank and character which belong to their species.

The Sovereigns of Persia are sometimes compelled to devise the means of secretly destroying those powerful subjects whose allegiance they suspect, but whom they fear openly to accuse or to attack. Policy, and indeed self-preservation, may justify such proceedings; but the necessity of having recourse to them cannot prevent their baneful influence on the mind, nor alter that impression which they are calculated to make. Cruelty never excites more indignation than when combined with art; and the undisguised violence of tyran-

nical power appears like virtue when compared with the treacherous acts of its timid weakness.

The observations which have been made upon the Kings of Persia apply to all despots who have similar power: but there are, fortunately for mankind, few nations where the authority vested in the chief ruler is so absolute. We cannot be surprised, when we consider their condition, that the monarchs of that kingdom have, in general, been careless of the rights of others, but tenacious of their own; that they have recognised no limit to their oppression but apprehension of revolt; that they have only measured their indulgence in pleasure by their power of enjoying it; that they have sought to amass treasure by every means that did not violate laws and usages which it was deemed dangerous to infringe; that they have entered on wars with no views but those connected with personal glory; and that they have only considered the prosperity of their country an object of their care, as it was calculated to promote their individual interests and reputation.

That of the princes of the blood.

The character of the princes of the blood in Persia can never be correctly known. They always act under great restraint. Their manners are in general kind and prepossessing; as their principal object is to attach to their person those with whom they associate, and to gain a popularity that may promote their future advancement. Though the situation of these princes should impress them with the necessity of great prudence, if not of dissimulation, the flattery of those by whom they are surrounded, and the arrogance of high birth, very frequently counteract these salutary impressions: and, when intrusted with the exercise of authority, they often display as much

CHAP. XXVI.

violence as if their brows were already encircled with that crown which is to vest them with despotic and uncontrolled power.

Of the ministers and chief officers of the court.

The ministers and chief officers of the Court of Persia are almost always men of polished manners, well skilled in the business of their respective departments, of pleasant conversation, subdued temper, and very acute observation: but these agreeable and useful qualities are, in general, all that they possess. Nor is virtue or liberal knowledge to be expected in men whose lives are wasted in attention to forms; whose means of subsistence are derived from the most corrupt sources; whose occupation is intrigues that have always the same objects, that of preserving themselves, or of ruining others; who cannot, without danger, speak any language but that of flattery and deceit; and who are, in short, condemned, by their condition, to be venal, artful, and false. There have, no doubt, been many ministers of Persia whom it would be injustice to class in this general description: but even those most distinguished for their virtues and their talents, have been forced, in some degree, to accommodate their principles to their station; and, unless where the confidence of their sovereign has placed them beyond the fear of rivals, necessity has compelled them to practise habits of subserviency and dissimulation, which are at variance with that truth and integrity that can alone constitute a claim to the respect which all are disposed to grant to good and great men.

Of the governors of provinces and cities.

The characters of the governors of provinces and of cities may be said to be in a considerable degree formed on that of the reigning sovereign: but the system of the government must always dispose this class to abuse the brief authority with which they are vested.

They are, however, from the situation in which they are placed, in general more manly and open, both in their manner and conduct, than the ministers and courtiers; and are therefore, as a body, entitled to more respect: for habits of violence and injustice do not debase the nature of man so much as those of deceit and falsehood.

Of the religious orders.

The religious orders in Persia are divided into several classes. The character of the few who have attained very high rank, has been before noticed. They are usually men of learning, of mild temper, and retired habits. They are very careful to preserve the respect they enjoy, by cherishing those impressions that are entertained of their piety and humility. It is rare to see them intolerant, except in cases where they deem the interest of that religion, of which they are the head, in danger. The lower classes of the priesthood in Persia are commonly of a very opposite character to their superiors. With little knowledge, and great pretensions, they demand a respect which they seldom receive; and are, in consequence, among the most discontented of the community. The general disposition of the Persians to treat strangers of a different religion with kindness and hospitality, is a subject of constant irritation to them. They rail at all communication with infidels, and endeavour to obtain an importance with the lower orders of the people by a display of their bigotry and intolerance. This class of men are often accused, by their countrymen, of indulging in the gratification of the worst passions of the mind. To say a man hates like a moollah, is to assert that he cherishes towards another, sentiments of the most inveterate hostility.

Of the inhabitants of cities and towns.

There is a considerable difference of character among the inhabitants of the various cities and towns of Persia, which originates

CHAP. XXVI in the opposite feelings and habits which they have derived from their ancestors. The natives of Kazveen, Tabreez, Hamadan, Shiraz, and Yezd, are as remarkable for their courage, as those of Koom, Kashan, and Isfahan, are for their cowardice. The former are chiefly descended from martial tribes; while the forefathers of the latter have, for many centuries, pursued civil occupations. But, though some of the citizens of Persia are less warlike than others, the different shades of character which this occasions are not of so much consequence as to prevent their being included in a general description. The whole of this community may be deemed, as far as regards their personal appearance, a fine race of men: they are not tall; but it is rare to see any of them diminutive or deformed, and they are in general strong and active. Their complexions vary from a dark olive to a fairness which approaches that of a northern European: and if they have not all the bloom of the latter, their florid healthy look often gives them no inconsiderable share of beauty. As a people, they may be praised for their quickness of apprehension, their vivacity, and the natural politeness of their manners. They are sociable and cheerful; and, with some remarkable exceptions, as prodigal in disbursement as they are eager of gain *. The higher classes of the citizens of Persia are kind and indulgent masters; and the lower ranks are, as far as respects the active performance of their duty, and the prompt execution of the orders they receive, the best of servants. In countries where the law grants equal protection to all ranks of society,

* The lower classes of merchants in Persia are often very avaricious and sordid. Some of them, indeed, from indulging in the habit of acquiring money, become perfect misers.

and where servitude does not imply dependence, the master and servant are much more separated than in despotic states. In the latter, where there are no middle classes, the servant is often the humble friend, and lives in habits of intimacy that could only exist where the actual distinction is so great as to remove all danger of either forgetting the inequality of their condition.

The falsehood of the Persians

The falsehood of the Persians is proverbial: nor are the inhabitants of that country forward to deny this national reproach: but they argue, that this vice appertains to the government, and is the natural consequence of the condition of the society in which they live: and there can be no doubt, that when rulers practise violence and oppression, those who are oppressed will shield themselves by every means within their power: and when they are destitute of combination and strength, they can only have recourse to art and duplicity. Nor is the moral character always debased by the use of this species of defence: instances continually occur in Persia, as in other countries subject to an arbitrary government, where the head of a village, or the magistrate of a city, entitles himself to the gratitude and admiration of those under him, by a virtuous and undaunted perseverance in falsehood, by which he endangers his own life and property, to save others who consider him as their guardian and protector.

The frame of private society in Persia is, perhaps, still more calculated to render men artful and false than the constitution of their government. The wives and slaves of a despotic husband and master must have all the vices of their debased condition. The first lessons which their children learn from the example of those they love, is to practise deceit; and this early impression is confirmed by all their

CHAP. XXVI

future habits. They may hear and admire moral sentences upon the beauty and excellence of truth; but prudence warns them against a rigid adherence to so dangerous a virtue. The oaths which they constantly use to attest their veracity, are only proofs of their want of it. They swear by the head of the king, by that of the person they address, by their own, by that of their son, that they are not asserting what is false: and if a stranger should continue to evince suspicion, they sometimes exclaim, "Believe me; for, though a Persian, I am "speaking truth." There are, no doubt, some of the natives of Persia who do not deserve to be included in this general description, and who are distinguished by their regard for truth: but their numbers are too inconsiderable to save their countrymen from the reproach of falsehood, as a prevalent national vice.

Their proneness to passion.

The citizens of Persia are not subdued by their situation into a submissive character. They are easily inflamed into passion, and act, when under its influence, like men careless of the result. A stranger, who is unacquainted with the nature of the government, and the latitude of speech which it permits in those whom it oppresses, is surprised to hear the meanest inhabitant of a town venting imprecations* against his superiors, nay, sometimes against the sacred person of the king himself. These extraordinary ebullitions of passion, which are very common among the lower orders in Persia, generally pass unheeded. Sometimes they may provoke a reproof, or a few blows; but they never receive consequence from the unwise interference of power to repress them.

* The Persians not only vent their abuse on the person who has offended them, but on his whole kindred, and more particularly his female relatives. Their abuse is generally very obscene.

CHAP. XXVI

Their fluency of language, and freedom of conversation.

Many of the inhabitants of the principal cities in Persia are men of some education: but even those who are not so, are remarkable for the fluency of their language. They express themselves with a freedom and boldness that is not always restrained by the disparity of rank between them and the person whom they address. Hajee Ibrahim, the late Prime Minister of Persia, who gloried in the name of citizen, used to delight in relating a dialogue which took place between his brother, who was Beglerbeg, or Governor of Isfahan, and a seller of vegetables in that city *.—On an extraordinary impost being laid upon every shop, the latter forced himself into the governor's presence when he was giving public audience, and exclaimed, that he was totally unable to pay the tax which had been imposed on him. "You must pay it, or leave the city," was the reply. "I cannot pay it," said the man; "and to what other "place can I go?"—"You may either proceed to Shiraz, or Kashan, "if you like those towns better than this," said the governor. "Your "brother," replied the shopkeeper, "is in power at one of these "cities, and your nephew at the other: what relief can I expect "in either?"—"You may proceed to court," said the ruler, "and "complain to the king, if you think I have committed injustice."—"Your brother, the Hajee, is prime minister," said the man. "Go "to Hell!" exclaimed the enraged governor, "and do not trouble "me any more!"—"The holy man †, your deceased father, is

* Hajee Ibrahim repeated this anecdote to me with great animation. He, indeed, particularly delighted in mentioning any thing that reflected honour upon the spirit of the citizens of Persia, whom it was his policy through life to support against the wandering tribes of that country.

† The name of the father of the governor was Hajee Hashe. The expression used by the shopkeeper was Hajee-murhoom, which means the deceased hajee, or "pilgrim."

CHAP. XXVI. "perhaps there," said the undaunted citizen. The crowd could not suppress their smiles at the boldness of their countryman: and the governor, who shared the general feeling, bade the complainant retire, and he would attend to his case, provided he would not bring a curse upon his family, by insisting that they shut him out of all hopes of justice, both in this world, and in that which is to come.

General character and condition of the military tribes.

The character of the military tribes differs essentially from that of the other inhabitants of Persia. The chiefs of these clans are often as much distinguished for their generosity as their courage. They are, from their condition, less artful than the ministers and principal civil officers of the kingdom: but they cannot be deemed exempt from that vice, though it is corrected by their pride and violence. Arrogant from birth, and surrounded, from infancy, by devoted dependents, their minds are habituated to overrate their own pretensions, and depreciate those of others. When inflamed with passion, they in an instant lose all that courtly manner which they are accustomed to assume, and give way to the most ungovernable rage. They seldom suffer from the bold imprudence of the language which they use on these occasions, as they can always plead in excuse the habits of the rude class to which they belong*: and the consideration they demand, upon this ground, is hardly

* I one day heard a nobleman of one of these tribes use the most violent and insulting language, when speaking of the prime minister. His imprudence appeared greater, as some of the minister's particular friends were present. Apprehensive of the consequence, I next day asked him, if any thing had happened. "It is all "settled," he said: "I have made an apology. I told the minister that I was an "Eelleatee, (a man of a wandering tribe); and that, you know," he added, laughing, "is an excuse for any thing wrong that a man can say or do."

ever refused, even by the monarch himself, if he has been the object of their intemperance. The character of these military nobles may be said to change with the state of their country: when that is settled for any long period, they lose a great deal of their native honesty and violence. Educated at the capital, where, in youth, they are generally kept as hostages for the good conduct of their fathers; and compelled to constant attendance on the king after they have attained manhood; they become in time courtiers, and are not, except in being more haughty, materially different from the other nobles and principal officers of the country. We can neither praise them, nor any other of the higher ranks in Persia, for their strictness in either moral or religious duties: to the former, they do not even pretend to give much attention; and though they are careful as to the observance of all the forms of the latter, they often appear indifferent as to the substance, and are in the habit of discussing the tenets and dogmas of their faith with a freedom that sometimes borders upon impiety*.

* In Persia, religion is a favourite topic of conversation, and particularly when a stranger of an opposite faith to that of Mahomed is of the party. It is not unusual to hear this subject treated in a manner which proves, at least, that there is the utmost latitude of speech. I have frequently listened to these discussions with some surprise. I heard a person of high rank one day exclaim, in a mixed company, in which some priests were maintaining the sacred nature of the claims of the descendants of the prophet: "This is all very well for superstitious fools who know no better: but I "have travelled and read, and have more than once met with a dog of a Syud, and "an angel of a Jew!" This speech produced a very hearty laugh at the expense of the holy man who had commenced the conversation. I find in one of my manuscripts a very ludicrous instance of the open impiety of a nobleman of rank now living in Khorassan. He heard a moollah describe, in the pulpit, the manner in which the

CHAP. XXVI

The character of the Eelleats, or men who continue to dwell in tents, is very opposite to that of the inhabitants of cities. They have the virtues and vices of their condition; are sincere, hospitable, and brave; but rude, violent, and rapacious. They are not in need of falsehood and deceit, and therefore not much in the habit of practising them: but if they have fewer vices than the citizens of Persia, it is evidently the absence of temptation, and the ignorance of luxury and refinement, which give them all the superiority they boast; for it is remarked, that they never settle in towns, or enter them as victors, without exceeding the inhabitants in every species of profligacy *.

The females of Persia who dwell in towns are usually placed in the situation of slaves; and have, therefore, many of those qualities which belong to that condition. The different shades of character of a race who can hardly be said to have any influence in the community, is of little importance; and if it were otherwise, we cannot have sufficient information of the subject to form any correct judgment upon it. If common report is to be credited, or if we grant our belief to the tales of Persian writers, the art and ingenuity

angels Monker and Nakir visited the grave the moment after the corpse is deposited in it. He went away, determined to satisfy his mind of the truth of this assertion by a physical experiment: and the next time he heard the priest mention the subject, he exclaimed, before the astonished congregation, "All that fellow says is a lie! "My servant," he added, "died four days ago; and as I was resolved to discover the "truth, I stuffed his mouth quite full with dry grain. I have since opened his grave, "and the grain is exactly where it was placed: it is therefore quite impossible," he continued, "that he could have either spoken to man or angel!"

* It would be disgusting to enter into a catalogue of the vices of a people among whom the indulgence of unnatural lust is not considered a crime.

of the women of that country are very often successful in eluding the jealous vigilance of their domestic tyrants. Of the females of the wandering tribes we have already spoken: they enjoy a fair portion of liberty; and if they are inferior to the natives of cities in beauty of person and softness of manner, they are superior to them in industry, in chastity, and many other virtues. We meet, indeed, with frequent examples, among this class, of an elevation of sentiment, and an heroic courage, which nothing but the freedom of their condition could inspire.

In speaking generally* of the inhabitants of Persia, we may describe them as a handsome, active, and robust race of men, of lively imagination, quick apprehension, and of agreeable and prepossessing manners. As a nation, they may be termed brave: though the valour they have displayed, like that of every other people in a similar condition of society, has, in a great degree, depended upon the character of their leaders, and the nature of those objects for which they have fought. Their vices are still more prominent than their virtues. Compelled, by the nature of their government, to have recourse, on every occasion, to art or violence, they are alternately submissive and tyrannical. Many of their more serious

* This character of the Persians only describes the Mahomedan population of that country. That of the Armenians who live in Persia may be given in a few words: they are a submissive and humble race, who endeavour, by habits of industry, to obtain a livelihood among a people by whom they are treated with harshness and contempt. The Jews are much more despised than the Armenians, and their character and condition are more degraded. We have before spoken (Vol. I. page 273,) of the few families of Guebers, or "worshippers of fire," who remain in Persia, and whom their Mahomedan conquerors seem to tolerate, that they may enjoy their triumph by protracted oppression.

CHAP. XXVI defects of character may be attributed to the same cause: and there is, perhaps, no country in which so much of the immorality of its inhabitants can be referred to a bad system of internal administration as Persia. This reflection, though it may mitigate the sense we entertain of the depravity of individuals, leaves but little hope of their amendment; for it is evident that can alone be effected by the concurrence of many radical changes, with a complete alteration in their political condition; an event which neither their past history nor present state can lead us to anticipate.

INDEX.

A.

ABAD the Great, i. 8, 9.

Abaka Khan succeeds his father, Hulakoo Khan, i. 425; his country invaded by Barkah Khan, *ib.*; defeats Borak Aghlan, 426; his death and character, *ib.*; his marriage, and an opinion entertained of his having embraced the Christian faith, 427.

Abas-Abul-Ahmed.— See Muatamed-ul-ullah.

Abbas the Great, his search after Pehlivi manuscripts, i. 273, note; is placed under the tutelage of Aly Kooli Khan, 516; an order is sent for his execution, which is deferred, and his life saved, *ib.*; is proclaimed king, 518; marches from Khorassan, and takes Kazveen, 521; is occupied in the establishment of his authority, 524; returns to his capital, 525; marches to the relief of Mushed, but is taken ill, and compelled to remain at Teheran, *ib.*; returns to Kazveen, 526; marches against the Turks, and visits their camp in disguise, *ib.*; repels the invasion of the Turks by the reduction of Ghilan, 527; proceeds against the Turks, but returns in consequence of a prediction of the astrologers, and abdicates the throne, *ib.*; reascends it, 528; attacks and defeats the Usbegs, *ib.*; reduces several provinces, 529; meditates the recovery of the provinces conquered by the Turks, *ib.*; his reception of Sir Anthony Sherley, 532; raises a corps of infantry, 533; his credentials to Sir Anthony Sherley on deputing him to the princes of Christendom, 534; privileges granted by him to the Christians in his kingdom, 535; takes Nahavund, and destroys its fortifications, 537; marches into Aderbijan, *ib.*; defeats the Turks, takes Tabreez, and invests Erivân, 538; attacks and defeats the Turks after a severe battle, 539; his personal scuffle with a Kurd, 541; recovers the provinces conquered by the Turks, *ib.*; the veneration in which he was held, 543; maintains an amicable intercourse with the Usbegs, the Emperor of Delhi, and the European states in India, 544; conquers the Island of Ormus, 546; disregards his treaty with the English, 547; deputes Sir Robert Sherley to England, 549; his reception and treatment of Sir Dodmore Cotton, *ib.*; becomes hostile to the British nation, 551; character of his government, 552; his improvement of the City of Isfahan, *ib.*; also of Mushed and other places, 553; his encouragement to Christians to settle in Persia, 554; his internal administration, 555; measures adopted by him to repress the turbulence of the Kûzel-bash tribes, 556; his religious character, 557; his toleration of religion, particularly the Christian, 559; his conduct to his own family, 560; contrives to put his son Suffee Meerza to death, 561; deprives two others of his sons of sight, 562; his cruel treatment of his son Khodâh-bundâh, 563; his death, 565; his personal appearance, general character, and government, *ib.*; his respect for the priesthood, ii. 574.

Abbas the Second succeeds his father, Sâm Meerza, i. 577; his excesses, 378; recovers Candahar, 579; his reception of Imaum Kooli Khan Usbeg, 580; shelters another prince of the